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The Sea Serpent;

OR,

THE BOY ROBINSON CRUSOE.

BY JUAN LEWIS.

AUTHOR OF "TRUST HER NOT," "THE SWAMP FOX,"
"THE SORCERER'S VICTIM," "MY QUAIN FAMIL-
IARS," "THE SKELETON HAND," "LIFE
AGAINST TIDE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE BOY HERO—HIS RESOLVE.

The tide was rising on a sandy shore. A boy, of fifteen years of age or thereabouts, was walking slowly up and down along the margin, lost in thought.

At every step the incoming tide obliterated his footprints, but he evidently gave no thought to wind or tide.

A heavy wave sent the spray dashing over him, and recalled him to himself.

"I will do it!" he declared, with emphatic gesture; "I shall succeed. Something tells me so; I will begin at once the search for my uncle, the old sea-captain."

And with these words he walked briskly in the direction of a small cottage, the roof and chimney of which were visible among the trees a few hundred yards inland.

A cottage formerly his mother's—now his own, for she was buried yesterday.

His name was Julian Adams. He was entirely alone in the world—alone with the single exception to which he had alluded.

That exception was his mother's brother, an old sea-captain—James Kidd—of whom he had often heard in earlier years, who had gone to India and the East, and was still supposed to be living in or near Bombay.

It had been one of Julian's boyish dreams to go out to his uncle, and in fact he had only been restrained therefrom by the urgent solicitations of his mother, whom he loved too well to leave in loneliness.

As he now deliberated in reference to his future course, this early dream came back to him with renewed force, and the result of his deliberations, as we have seen, was to lose no time in carrying this purpose into execution.

But there was one difficulty in the way, as it now occurred to him; he did not even know his uncle's address.

Beyond the bare fact that he was somewhere in India, where he was supposed to have settled, and that he had once been heard from at Bombay, he knew of him absolutely nothing.

That he was a man of vast wealth Julian's mother had believed, but that he had been incensed at her marriage she also believed, for he had never held communication with his sister after the first announcement of that event. But, trust-

ing to the softening influence of time, and to the perseverance that usually commands success, Julian determined at every hazard to find this uncle; to make known his kinship to this man of ominous name, but as Julian believed of good heart—in short, to begin at once the search for Captain Kidd.

He reached the house and went in.

Everything was as his mother had left it, for her illness had been brief, and there had been no change.

Her familiar easy-chair was in its accustomed place, but alas! empty; the clock ticking away upon the mantle as it had done many a year; the tea-kettle by the fireside—as in happier days; and as Julian looked around him and thought how soon these old associates would be but a memory of the past, he dropped upon a lounge and burst into tears. For his was a tender heart.

For some time he sat with his head upon his hands, but at length dried his tears, and rising walked the floor with all the latent energy of his nature coming to the surface.

To enter upon the search which he proposed, he knew would require money.

Besides the house and grounds, left him by his deceased parents, the sum total of his own and his mother's savings amounted to two hundred dollars.

To the boy this seemed a large amount, and he had it ready to his hand, saved up between the leaves of the old family Bible; which book his mother had always taught him was a far safer place of deposit than any other—for was it not a treasure in itself?

He now proceeded to pack up such things as he felt he would most need, placing his mother's Bible with its treasure in a breast-pocket, and filling his knapsack, locked all the doors and windows of the house, and coming out took one long silent glance at the premises thus left desolate and forsaken.

He was in the act of turning away, when a gruff voice accosted him, and looking up he saw Squire Lawson, a petty magistrate and neighbor who lived a mile off.

He looked suspiciously at Julian's well-filled knapsack, and at the closed house.

"Where are you going, Julian?" he demanded.

Julian faltered. Of all the men in the world, he thought, this man was the least likely to take any interest in the course he had marked out.

He had often heard him say, that there was no romance about him, and with a sharpness beyond his years, the boy already foresaw that his projected search for his uncle might be considered by his elders as an enterprise both romantic and foolish.

He hesitated.

The man saw his hesitation and looked at him more suspiciously.

"I asked you just now," he said sternly, "where you were going; I repeat it, and demand to know."

"Demand, sir?" said Julian, flushing with some resentment in his tone.

"Yes, demand," responded Squire Lawson.

"I have been appointed your guardian. See! here is my authority!" displaying a folded paper as he spoke; "and I have come down to take possession of your mother's property before it is all wasted by neglect, or squandered by you."

Julian turned from hot to cold at these words, but his voice had a manly ring as he replied: "Sir, you have no right; I do not acknowledge you as my guardian; I am old enough to choose for myself; I was fourteen last year. My mother has often told me that after that age any boy could choose his own guardian."

Squire Lawson looked angry and annoyed.

"Do you undertake to tell me the law—me, a magistrate?"

"No, sir," replied the boy promptly, but firmly; "I tell you only the truth as it applies to myself; that I am past fourteen, and that if I have a guardian, as I suppose I may, he will be one of my own choosing."

"And do you then object to me?"

"I have had no thought about the matter, as yet, sir," replied Julian, evasively, who had a strong reason for not incurring the ill-will of the squire. That reason might be found in the consideration he felt for the bright eyes and



THE SEA SERPENT ON THE WRECK.

pleasant ways of his school companion and play mate, Maggie Lawson, the only child of the squire.

"If I had thought about the matter, sir," Julian continued reflectively, "my mind would have been less likely to have turned to you, sir, than to my father's old friend, Mr. Haven."

"What! old Benny Haven?" exclaimed Squire Lawson, with both surprise and contempt in his tone. "What does old Benny Haven know about law?"

"I cannot say, sir," responded Julian deferentially, making a movement for departure, "but he knows a little of most everything, and as I was going away for a short time, I had already determined on leaving the keys with him. Good-day, sir."

Without giving the squire time for reply, Julian moved away, leaving him standing in the roadway looking darkly after him, as he increased his pace to a rapid walk.

A few minutes' walking brought him in sight of a large white house, situated on an eminence, and having an appearance of substantial comfort. Toward this dwelling the boy's eyes turned somewhat longingly, as if in expectation of seeing Maggie Lawson—for this was the squire's residence.

She was not in sight, however, and after approaching within a short distance, perhaps a quarter of a mile, the boy turned aside at a stile in the low stone wall, and went off in a path at right angles from the house.

This course took him across an open field, up a rise of ground, toward a wooded knoll, which he reached and penetrated, going through to the opposite side, and coming out suddenly upon a shelving terrace of flat rock overlooking the sea, from the seaward side of which descended an abrupt precipice of fifty feet or more.

An old man, hale and hearty, in sailor's garb, was sitting on a low stool in front of a rude but comfortable cabin that formed the background of this terrace, mending a net and alternately glancing at the bright face of a young girl of thirteen or fourteen years, who was sitting on a coil of rope at his feet.

The appearance of Julian on this scene was hailed with manifestations of warm appreciation, not unmingled with surprise at the knapsack he carried.

The old sailor threw down the net he was mending, and the young girl sprang to her feet.

"Hallo! my lad," cried the old man, in a voice resembling the roar of a distant surf; "whither bound with that ballast?"

Julian laughed, and unslinging his knapsack, laying it at the old man's feet; taking his great brown hand in both his own, while the young girl came close and laid her hand on his shoulder with an expression of pleasure.

"I am going away, Uncle Benny," he said, "and I have brought you the keys of our cottage," producing them as he spoke.

"Going away?" gasped the old man at his hearer.

"Away?" echoed Maggie, for the young girl was she.

"Yes," said Julian, turning to Maggie; "and I am so glad I have met you here, where I can say good-by. I was afraid I should not see you."

"But where are you going, Julian?" she asked, while her pretty cheek grew a shade paler.

Julian waved his hand toward the sea and the distant ocean, as if he were a sovereign, and there lay his empire.

At this moment a voice was heard calling the name of Maggie. The young girl started.

"They are looking for me and I must run home," she said, regretfully. "But you will not go to-day?" she added.

"That will depend upon the wind and the tide," he replied, looking along the coast toward a small inlet where a schooner could be seen loading with lumber.

"If I do not get off you will see me again, Maggie," he added; "and in any event you will hear from me," and throwing his arm around her neck, he pressed his lips to hers, and so they parted.

In a moment her light footsteps could be heard, pattering among the leaves, along the wooded path he had just come.

"And now, Uncle Benny," said Julian, as Maggie's airy form disappeared from their gaze, "let us go into the cabin; I have something very, very important to say to you."

CHAPTER II.

SOMETHING IMPORTANT—THE OLD SAILOR'S LETTER.

THE interior of the old sailor's cabin was enough like that of a vessel to well merit that designation.

It was the exact counterpart of the cabin of a ship, even to the ship's lantern hanging aloft.

There were lockers and cupboards, and bunks; coils of rope, swing-shelves and sideboards; and in addition thereto a big anchor standing in the corner, with quite a lengthy hawser coiled around it; and about everything there was an air of neatness that would have pleased the heart of any housewife; for all of which, thanks were alone due to Benny Haven, for the old sailor lived entirely alone, with the exception of a parrot, almost as gray and hoarse as himself, and showing equal vitality.

This parrot was in a circular cage, hanging near the door, and knew Julian at once, on his entering, for he saluted him, with, "Hallo! J le," followed by a wild, "Ha! ha!" extraordinary in depth and hoarseness; which familiar greeting Julian suitably recognized.

The old sailor invited Julian to a seat on one of the lockers, and with an air of kindly interest told him to, "Go ahead."

"Well then," said Julian, "as I have intimated I am going to sea; but not quite as a sailor, Uncle Benny," he added, as he saw the old man shake his

head rather gravely. "You have heard me speak of my uncle Kidd—Captain Kidd," he continued.

"Ay! often, often, and know'd him too," was the response.

"Well then, what do you think of my going out to India to find him?"

"I think," said the old sailor, anxiously—"but, let me hear what *you* yourself think, Julian."

"Why I think I had better go, as you see, for I am all packed up to start, and have already left home, and am on my way. In fact, I have started."

"Then I think so too," was the response of the old man, visibly brightening at the determination expressed in Julian's tone and manner.

"I always told your mother that the captain wasn't so bad as they thought him; though his name was a terrible one enough. But, hang it, what's in a name?"

"Nothing—nothing, in that at least," responded Julian.

"Ay! ay! nor in t'other one now, for the owner of that was hanged, and good riddance, long ago. But you are going out as gen'l'man passenger, instead of sailor," he added, looking at Julian admiringly, and yet with some show of earnest regret.

"Yes," said Julian, reflectively, "but I do that to save time, otherwise I should prefer to go as a sailor."

"I see," was the response; the old man brightening under this explanation. "To save time."

"You have the money, Julian," he added, inquiringly.

"Yes," said Julian, promptly. "Two hundred dollars."

The old sailor drew out a small box from under the bunk, and after selecting one from several keys, unlocked it.

It contained some gold and silver, the coinage of different nationalities. There were Spanish doubloons, English crown pieces, French Louis d'ors, German thalers, and smaller coin from the American mint.

"It takes a great deal of money, Julian, to go as gen'l'man passenger, and I would like to have my dear boy," said the old man tenderly, "to be as high toned as any o' them. Take out of this as much as you will need."

Julian was much affected by this kind offer, but refused to take any from the old man's store, which refusal was sharply contested by the old sailor.

But Julian was firm, and the old man returned the money and box to the secret depository.

"You can serve me in a better way now, Uncle Benny," he said, "as I think I am amply provided for in the way of money for the present. I want you to be my guardian, and you will take charge of the property while I am away. It will only be necessary, I suppose, to go to the cottage once or twice a week, just to see if everything remains as I left it. Will you accept this trust for me?" concluded Julian, earnestly.

"You have been my parents' friend, and my friend."

"Sartin, boy, sartin," said the old man with glistening eyes, "but there's no pirates about here likely to board the property while you are away."

"Why, as for that, Uncle Benny," said Julian, "Squire Lawson has got himself appointed my guardian, under the mistaken supposition that I was not old enough to choose for myself, and he demanded possession."

"And what did you say?" questioned the old sailor, sitting bolt upright, and brushing the scanty hair from his brow like a strong swimmer about to dive; "what did you say to his demand?"

"I said," responded Julian, "that I was of age to choose my own guardian, and that if I thought of choosing, it would be you."

The old sailor's great brown hand patted the boy's shoulder with the gentleness of a woman.

"Dear boy," he said, "that's like you. He gave it up I s'pose!"

"Yes, sir, for the time; but I left him, without further words, on the highway and came directly here."

Uncle Benny nodded his approval.

"Should he take any further steps, I shall of course know about it," he added, "and shall give him to understand that you and yours are shipped with me and are under my charge."

And so saying he arose and began walking to and fro.

It was clear, there was a latent energy in the old man, that opposition would very quickly develop; and Julian thought with much satisfaction, as he looked at him, that his cause could not have been placed in safer hands.

Uncle Benny paused abruptly in his walk.

"What port will you make first?" he inquired.

"New York," replied Julian, promptly. "Once there, I will visit the principal shipping offices to ascertain the quickest and cheapest way of reaching India. I am in hopes of meeting some one who has been out there and who has recently returned. Quite likely I will be able to hear something of my Uncle. Any one hearing his name would not be likely to forget it."

"Ay! ay! very singular—Captain Kidd. Who'd 'a' think that old Benny Haven would have ever been encouraging a search for such a piratical name as that? But, my boy, I can help you in this more than you think. I know a man that's out there somewhere, and a Big Injun he is, too, to my thinking—a king or queen at least of some of those heathenish countries. He was a mate of mine once. Ned Trus-thim by name; a rising, striving, shifty chap he was. Ned allus said he'd be a Big Injun some day, and I remember the men called him the Prophet of the Larboard Watch; for he was allus a prophesying great things for himself, like some other people I have heard of. He left the ship at Gibraltar, a clear-

ing his intention of going to Turkey and the East; and if he's out there, he must be a king at least now, for that was more'n twenty years ago.

"I'll give you a letter to him, Julian, in case you come across him. You are a scholar, my boy, and there's pen, ink, and paper, in the locker there; take it out and write such a letter as I shall direct. Now then:

"To Ned Trus-thim, King."

"But perhaps he is not a king yet, Uncle Benny," said Julian, after he had written this address.

"No, that's a fact," was the response, and the old sailor's hands went up through his scant hair again with that gesture, habitual to him, of the swimmer about to dive.

He rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

"But he may be a king of good fellows," he continued, with a sudden burst of satisfaction. "D'y'e see Julian?"

Julian nodded an assent.

"That direction will do then," continued the old sailor; "go on."

"These by the hand of my best beloved boy, who isn't my son, nor yet my nephew; but I love him as well as if he were both. This leaves me stout and hearty, and comfortable on shore, which I never thought to be, and hoping it will find you the same, and a king as you expected, and able to give a helping hand to my boy, which his name is Ju' Adams; and if you can make him a Prince, I'd be glad, and he'd be well deserving the same. He's going to search for his uncle, Captain Kidd, not the bloody pirate of course. I close these orders by hoping that with your aid he will find him."

"Signed with the hand of your old messmate, BENNY HAVEN."

"And witnessed by my boy,

"JULIAN ADAMS."

"Have you got it all down?" he asked, after pausing a moment.

"All but the signature," said Julian.

"Here is the place for you to sign," he added, handing him the pen.

"It's a pretty stiff flipper for this sort of work," said the old man, taking it from him and seating himself, "but I can do it after a fashion."

It was indeed rather a laborious task for the old sailor, but he accomplished it at last, and BENNY HAVEN, in thick, broad letters, somewhat strangely suggestive of the owner of the name, stood out staringly upon the paper.

Julian affixed his own signature as witness, dried and folded the document, and put it safely in his pocket.

"I purpose going to New York by the lumber schooner loading at the mill wharf," said Julian, buttoning his coat and slinging his knapsack, preparatory to departure. "I suppose they will sail at the turn of the tide," he continued, "and it must be near that now. I will have to say, good-by, Uncle Benny."

"I hate to have you go, my boy," said the old man, as Julian put his hand in his. "Ye are *sure*, now, it is for the best, Julian, and you have no hesitation in starting?"

"None, whatever," said Julian, briskly. "Think how soon I shall be back, loaded with wealth and honors perhaps—and bringing with me Captain Kidd."

Hand in hand they came out of the cabin.

"Good-by, Jule!" said a hoarse voice, and the parrot hopped to and fro, and chuckled to himself.

"Good-by, Poll," cried Julian in return, as the door closed.

A lovelier view than that from old Benny Haven's cabin the eyes seldom rest upon.

Looking south, and to the eastward, only the broad expanse of water, dotted here and there with sails of vessels, and now and then an occasional steamer, met the glance.

Away to the westward, beyond the bright margin of white sand that marked the ocean boundary—

"The very sea-mark of its utmost sail,"

was a low, indented shore, with umbrageous foliage, contrasting its deep green with the color of the waters.

Near at hand, and extending inland perhaps a half-mile, was a broad, deep inlet, where a tide-mill in active operation, and a wharf adjacent thereto, showed the loaded schooner, of which Julian had spoken, ready for departure.

Over all the bright sunlight shone richly, giving to every object a glow of warmth and color.

Good-by was said, and they parted; not without deep emotion on both sides, and Julian descended by a rude path to the beach below.

Looking back he saw the old man's figure, strongly outlined against the wooded background, and waved a final farewell.

In ten minutes more he was on board the schooner, made his arrangements with the captain, with whom he was acquainted, and half an hour afterward was watching Uncle Benny's figure, growing less and less on the rocky terrace as the schooner stood boldly out to sea.

CHAPTER III.

THE LAND-SHARK—IN THE TOILS!

THE voyage to New York was not without incident.

A huge dog belonging to the vessel, with which Julian was playing, made a mis-step on a loose piece of timber and tumbled overboard.

It was the second day out, and quite a breeze was blowing at the time, and the animal would probably have been lost but for Julian going to his rescue. Seizing a coil of rope, making one end fast, and springing overboard with the other, the rope spun

out, and Julian swinging toward the dog fastened it about his neck, and two or three of the crew, who had been excited witnesses of the mishap, drew them both on board, where they were received with much rejoicing.

Sometime during the night the schooner reached the city, but Julian remained on board till morning. Immediately after breakfast he bade farewell to the schooner, and made his way into South street, looking with amazement at the vast forest of masts and shipping of all nationalities that everywhere met his gaze.

Disregarding the many invitations of Israelitish dealers in second-hand merchandise and damaged wares of all descriptions to "Schtop a leetle!" and come in and purchase, he pursued his course, looking for some vessel about to sail for the East.

Many of the vessels had placards, or streamers flying, stating they were to sail for such and such ports, but he saw none for India.

One immense vessel, at length, attracted his attention by its bulwarks being so high out of the water and its bowsprit being thrust, like an inquisitive nose, 'way up among the business interests of the street.

A placard at her fore-rigging was inscribed, in flaming capitals, "UP FOR HONG KONG AND CHINESE PORTS."

Though her destination was not exactly that for which he was looking, he concluded to go on board of her.

Going up the gang-plank at her side, which was almost as steep as the roof of an old-fashioned house, he found himself on her deck, and saw that her name, like her destination, was Hong Kong.

Julian gazed about him with interest.

It was the first time he had ever been on board a vessel of her size.

In addition to all the appointments of a first-class, full-rigged, clipper-built ship, she carried two brass bow-chasers, or guns, capable of throwing twelve-pound shot.

There was also a swivel gun amidships, to carry twenty-four-pound ball—a formidable weapon.

Julian sought out the captain, whom he found a worthy representative of his class, and made his inquiries, which were briefly answered, and he was directed to an India-house, or firm, who were the agents of a line of vessels sailing to India.

Julian thanked the captain, and, as he was leaving, he inquired the use of the great guns he saw on deck.

"To keep off the pirates, my lad," said the captain; "the Chinese seas are not the safest cruising grounds in the world, and we often meet the Malay pirates swarming thereabouts."

Julian thought he would like to make the voyage with this captain, for he had an exceedingly pleasant face, and it seemed to Julian this was a field in which there might be a chance for distinction as well as adventure in exterminating these evil hordes of whom the captain had spoken. However, it did not lie in the line of his search now.

He, however, asked the captain the price of passage to Hong Kong.

The captain looked at him with some surprise.

"Why, my man, I might take you, always supposing your parents willing, for one hundred dollars."

"I have no parents living," said Julian, simply.

"If you were only going to India I would go with you. I shall see you again, perhaps," he added, as he took off his hat in farewell, and descended the gang-plank.

The captain watched him as he passed from view. "A manly little fellow," he said, "and yet with something gentle and almost womanly about him. He reminds me strangely—strangely of one I thought I had forgotten, and who has probably forgotten me. I hope the land-sharks may not get hold of him."

Julian went at once to the address given him by the captain.

It was in a solid, granite-looking building opposite the head of a long wharf, around which clustered thickly dark-hulled vessels of various tonnage.

The offices were quite dark within, and were lighted at the back with gas.

In that locality, it seemed to Julian, the shipping firms must consider gas a cheaper commodity than daylight, for no effort seemed to have been made for many years to admit the latter.

The small windows, having an outlook on a narrow alley, were so incrustated with dust and weather-stains that it was quite evident that the presiding genius of the place, whoever it might chance to be, had never been able to look out through them.

A high counter surrounded by a narrow railing, with openings here and there, separated the inmates from the outside public. A dingy place enough, thought Julian, and yet, as he soon learned, from this dingy office went forth an influence felt more than half round the world.

A wrinkled face with a complexion like musty parchment, below which was only visible a high, black stock of an ancient fashion, appeared at one of the openings of the railing and signed to Julian to approach. He did so and stated his business.

The man with a parchment face referred to a card lying on the desk.

"The Punjab, for Bombay, sails to-morrow," he said; "the fare is two hundred dollars."

"So much?" faltered Julian.

"So little!" said the man with parchment face, immovably. "Make up your mind and come again," he continued, waving his hand for him to give place to some one waiting behind.

Julian stepped back.

Here was an obstacle at the very beginning. The passage-money was a little larger sum than he could command. What was to be done?

He went out and walked toward the wharf where lay the Punjab, and went on board.

Her deck and wharf adjacent presented the usual

bustle and scene of busy activity always more or less visible just prior to a vessel's departure.

While deliberating what to do, he wondered whether they would take him as a sailor or cabin-boy, and made inquiries, receiving the information that they were already full-handed, and in any event he was much too small to go before the mast.

He stepped ashore, and as he went slowly up the wharf, he thought probably he would find an India paper at the office of the Punjab, and perhaps thus obtain information, possibly, of his uncle, not otherwise accessible.

He returned at once, made known his wishes, and was given copies of the Bombay Times, North China Herald, and other newspapers.

He searched them carefully, and pored for some time over the advertisements and shipping-lists, but no such name as Captain Kidd greeted his anxious vision.

Going out of the office somewhat depressed, and still wishing it were possible for him to go in some other way than as "gen'lman passenger"—in some capacity whereby he might accomplish his purpose—and keep his money, he had gone but a short distance when he was suddenly startled by being accosted with the words:

"Looking for a chance to ship, youngster?"

Glancing at his questioner, he saw a stout, bearded man, in a half-sailor costume, who was holding his hand out to him.

"Going to ship?" he repeated.

"If I can," replied Julian.

"Where do you wish to go, what port?" asked the stranger.

"India," said Julian; "Bombay, if possible."

"That's lucky," responded the bearded man; "I am the captain of a vessel—a splendid craft—and want a cabin-boy: you are just the chap I am looking for. You passed me at the door of the shipping office. I heard you within making inquiries about a passage, but you had better go with me and save your money till you get out there, unless you have more than you know what to do with, which isn't the case, I reckon."

"No," said Julian, brightening very much under the influence of this timely proposition, and the air of familiar friendliness assumed by the stranger.

"No, sir, it would take all the money I have and even some more to pay my passage in the Punjab." And involuntarily he put his hands to his breast to assure himself that his mother's Bible containing the money, less only the small amount he had paid on the schooner, was still there.

The man's eyes were watching him like those of a hawk.

"You have some friends here with you, I suppose," he asked, with affected carelessness.

"No," said Julian; "I am alone in the world with the exception of my uncle, who lives in India. If you are sailing in an Indiaman, perhaps you have met him out there," he added eagerly.

"Very likely," said the man coolly; "I know most everybody out there. What's his name?"

"Captain Kidd," replied Julian.

The man started and looked at Julian keenly from head to foot.

"You're joking," he said, with rather a discordant laugh.

"Oh, no, sir," said Julian earnestly; "that's his name."

"All right, then. But, blow me if I didn't think of the old pl— but never mind what I thought! I find I don't quite remember your uncle now, though I must know him, and shall think! It's such a decidedly queer name—smiles Smith, and beats Banagher clear out of sight. But, I'll remember him soon. Will you go with me?"

"I shall indeed be glad to go with you," said Julian. "Is your vessel one of the same line as the Punjab?"

The man glanced sharply about him, and up and down the street, where they were walking, before replying, then said, "Yes."

"Where does your vessel lay?" asked Julian, delighted at the prospect that now seemed opening.

"Over at Jersey City," was the response. "She is discharging her cargo. I am too busy to go over to-day, but will take you with me to-morrow. You can, meanwhile, stop with me. I have a friend who keeps a chop-house, not far from here, and as I was just going to my dinner, come along and I'll show you where, and you can dine with me."

He led the way up a narrow side street down one or two still narrower and further on into one opening into a squalid court, with a dingy house at the further end.

Not a very inviting place Julian thought, as he followed his conductor inside this house through a low dirty door.

The man seemed to read what was in Julian's mind, for he said, "We sailors—here to-day, and away to-morrow, and anywhere next week—are not very particular as to our quarters, but we can get as good dinners here as anywhere in this port."

There was a smell of cooking about the place, that was rather pleasant to Julian, for with his depression gone his naturally healthy appetite began to wake up. He said as much.

"We will have something to eat immediately," replied his new employer, and opening a side door, and giving some orders in a low tone without going in, he turned and said, "Come up stairs. It's more quiet above." Julian followed him through a dark, narrow passage, and up a creaking staircase, where the air was filled with stale odors.

The room into which he was ushered was rather dark and musty, but a flaring gaslight, which was turned up by his conductor, served to dispel somewhat the gloominess.

There was a low, rickety lounge in one corner of

the room, a round table and a few chairs, with one or two greasy newspapers lying upon the floor.

"Here you can make yourself comfortable," said his employer; "the dinner will be up very shortly; I will go down and hurry them up; I am getting hungry myself," and as he spoke he left the room.

Julian unsling his knapsack, and placed it in the corner.

He had only time to take a turn up and down the room, and glance once or twice through the broken slats, that formed the blinds of the narrow window, when the man returned.

He was followed by a waiter bearing steaks and hot coffee, with the usual side dishes, which his employer aided in placing on the table.

The waiter disappeared, and the man seated himself.

"Fall to, my lad," he said; "don't stand on ceremony."

Julian was too hungry not to avail himself of the last suggestion, and promptly complied, seating himself opposite the man.

Julian had drank one cup of coffee, and nearly finished eating, when he became conscious of a strange sensation—a sensation as if his senses were slipping away from him. In a vague sort of way it filled him with alarm. He attempted to rise, but sunk back in his seat.

He looked at the man helplessly; and in that moment the stranger seemed turned to a serpent, the glittering eyes of which, to the boy's fancy, were seeking with a dreadful fascination to control his wavering senses.

A voice, barely audible to him, was asking:

"Where is your knapsack?"

Julian felt mechanically for the strap.

"Never mind; I see it yonder."

This man was his enemy. A deep sense of the serpent-like fascination and the horror of his situation was growing upon Julian as this conviction asserted itself, and with all the energy of his soul, he made an effort to struggle against the helplessness that was creeping over him.

The man's glittering eyes were upon him.

The boy again attempted to rise; but in vain.

The man seized him by the arm, and with some muttered words the boy could not understand, half led, half carried him to the lounge, and Julian sunk back upon it.

His eyes closed. He was barely conscious of long fingers plucking at his breast, and a muttered growl like some hyena busy with its prey.

"My mother's Bible," he gasped, as he felt it being torn from him.

And with these words he was dimly sensitive of a terrible crash—a whirl, as if the house had fallen, and all sense of life and light left him.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RESCUE—CAPTAIN JAMES.

THE terrible crash of which Julian was thus dimly conscious as his senses left him, was caused by the door of the room being burst violently open.

There was a rush of footsteps—a yell of wrath and fear—a blow, and the treacherous scoundrel bending over the boy was sent whirling against the opposite side of the room, and fell limp and motionless.

For the tide had suddenly turned, and Julian was saved.

"Look up, my lad, look up!" cried the new-comer, catching Julian in his strong arms, and bearing him to the window, which he threw up for the admission of air.

But the effects of the drug administered in the boy's coffee had been too powerful, and Julian did not immediately revive.

His rescuer placed him gently back upon the sofa, threw cold water into his face, and stood looking down upon him with an expression of deep interest. Very easily we recognize him.

He was the captain of the vessel for Hong Kong, aboard of which Julian had noticed the brass guns.

He had seen Julian, while passing along South street, in conversation with the villain who had brought him here—a man whom he instantly recognized by the cut of his jib, as belonging to the class of land-sharks to which he had alluded when Julian was leaving the ship.

He picked up Julian's Bible, which had fallen from the hand of the prostrate ruffian.

Two or three bank notes of small denominations had fallen from it, which he replaced between the leaves.

"I see," he said, examining it, "it answers a double purpose: a Bible and a bank—Ha! but what is this?"

He was holding it open in his hands, and glancing at the fly-leaf. It bore this inscription and a date:

"From Julia Adams to her son Julian, on his tenth birthday."

For some minutes he stood looking at the words, as if they possessed a new and strange interest.

Could the love of the dead mother for her son have found expression in his glance, it would seem to have been strongly apparent then.

He placed the book carefully in his side-pocket, and turned sternly toward the corner where lay the fallen miscreant.

He made a resolute step toward the open window, and threw back the dilapidated blinds.

By what must seem a remarkable combination of circumstances, a policeman was just passing the head of the court and was looking that way.

The captain called, and beckoned to him; he promptly responded and came briskly up-stairs.

The man on the floor was beginning to recover.

"Take this villain into custody," said the captain;

"he has drugged and attempted to rob this lad, and but for my timely interference would have succeeded. Take him to the station-house and lock him up. When the boy recovers I will appear and make charges against him. My name is James—Captain James—of the clipper Hong Kong, of the American line."

The policeman stimulated the returning consciousness of his prisoner, by the customary cuffs and slaps in vogue with his class, assisted him to his feet, and led him out and down-stairs, retaining a fast hold of him. For none knew better than he that this class of ruffians were slippery customers.

Captain James continued his efforts in Julian's behalf, and finally succeeded in getting him on his feet, and walking him up and down the room, until by degrees the confused state of his intellect wore away, and at last his consciousness fully returned.

At first he stared about him in a bewildered sort of way, but on the captain's returning his mother's Bible, containing the money, that last recollection of those bony fingers plucking at his breast, and of that serpent-like fascination that had been upon him, returned, and he was himself again.

With strong appreciation of the danger he had so narrowly escaped, he pressed the captain's hand with a warmth that found additional vent in tears of thankfulness.

They left the place together, not a soul being visible in or about the house.

The sight of a policeman in this unclean rookery having had the effect of putting its foul birds to instantaneous flight. So prone are past misdeeds to rise in judgment.

Julian was still weak, and Captain James found it necessary to support him strongly by the arm as he led the way toward the dock where the Hong Kong was lying; but the open air and the walk, and the consciousness of safety did Julian more good than any medicine could have done.

The captain took him on board the Hong Kong and into the cabin, where he gave him a glass of wine, ordering him to lie down and endeavor to sleep.

Placing his knapsack beside him, and telling him to be perfectly at ease, and that he would soon return, he left the boy to himself.

Julian fell into a refreshing slumber, and when he awoke he found the captain sitting by his side, watching him with a tender interest which made Julian's heart go out to him.

He sat up, and at the captain's suggestion arose and walked about, and after a few minutes, declared he had never felt better.

Captain James smiled his approval.

"That being the case," he said, "and if you are entirely willing—not otherwise—I should be glad to hear your history; why you are leaving home, the particulars regarding your parents, and why you purpose going to India?"

Upon this, Julian, not without considerable emotion, proceeded to relate the whole of his little history. The recent death of his widowed mother, where and how she had lived, the property she had left, of his only relative, supposed to be in India, and all particulars in reference to his leaving home. Nor did he omit suitable mention of old Uncle Benny, of Maggie Lawson, and even the parrot; stating fully his purpose of finding, if he were living, the uncle he had never seen—in short, all the hopes and desires—the aims and aspirations with which he was setting out on his search for his uncle—Captain Kidd.

In connection with this narrative, he showed Captain James the letter of the old sailor to his ancient friend and messmate, Ned Trusthim.

The captain read it with an amused smile.

"What he says about this Captain Kidd not being the bloody pirate is rather suggestive," said Captain James, reflectively; "especially," he added, "as connected with your search. Strangely enough, I myself have often thought that a search for the original Captain Kidd, of the places he visited, and of the coast where he buried his treasures, might result in something important."

"Then you do not think my search for my uncle foolish or unwise?" asked Julian.

"No," said the captain, after a thoughtful pause, "I do not; I believe there is a Providence that shapes our ends, rough how them as we may, and I have no doubt but there is some wise purpose in your undertaking, which may hereafter be made apparent. I think you will surely find him. Meanwhile," he concluded, "as you have already discovered, it is not altogether safe for a lad, and a stranger, to carry money about with him, or to make inquiries for passage, or otherwise show that he has a considerable sum; perhaps your experience will suggest some other course."

"Oh, sir," said Julian, the gratitude he felt shining in his eyes, "if you could only let me go with you as cabin-boy, or in some other capacity, I should be glad, and if you will not, I will go as passenger. You said you would take me for one hundred dollars, and I can probably get passage from Hong Kong to India for less money than what I shall still have left."

"My lad," said the captain, "I do not want your money, but wished to know whether you still held fast to your purpose of going. My purser, in his double capacity of supercargo, needs a clerk, at least, I think he ought to have one; I see, by old Benny's letter, that you write well, for one of your age, and have no doubt you are good at figures, just the kind of assistant he ought to have. What do you say to ten dollars per month and found?" he added, with a business air.

"I shall accept, with many thanks to you, which I hope to show hereafter with acts—more than any mere words can do."

"Very well," said the captain, "it is an engagement. I will introduce you to the purser at once,

and he will show you what your new duties are to be, and where you are to take up your quarters.

"We will then go and make our formal complaint, for the punishment of that land-shark. He will be made to think twice before he tries that sort of thing again."

And with these words, they passed out on deck together.

CHAPTER V.

STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

THE Hong Kong was to sail the following week.

During the four days, that ensued, Julian had time to familiarize himself with the duties of his new position, and to write a letter to old Uncle Benny, giving him the name of the vessel, and the port to which he was bound, and such other particulars as he thought would be of interest to the old sailor, not omitting his adventure with the land-shark—he and the captain having formally attended at the police court, and seen the villain disposed of by a sentence of ten years' imprisonment.

As the time of departure grew near, he was kept very busy.

It was a proud day for Julian when they at last weighed anchor, dropped down the harbor, and stood out to sea.

Before them lay the broad expanse of water, behind them the great city, and in advance the foreign lands he hoped to visit before he returned.

Four days they kept upon their course, blest by favoring gales, when Julian saw the captain come on deck one evening at nightfall, and examine the barometer with an unusually grave face.

Up to this time there had been no evidence, to the boy's comparative inexperience, of an approaching storm. But the expression of the captain's face, now led him to more carefully scan sea and sky.

To the northward, just above the horizon, was a long irregular line, like a penciling of light on a darker background.

It had an appearance that Julian had never before seen, and he would have asked Captain James its meaning, for he saw he had observed it, but the captain went forward issuing orders; and directly afterward the whole crew were actively engaged in making everything snug and fast on deck, and stowing away and lashing the movables, in evident anticipation of a coming tempest.

But in such a stanch ship, and with an experienced captain and crew, Julian was rather pleased than otherwise at the prospect.

How little did he appreciate what was foreshadowed by that strange sky and sea.

An hour thereafter it was blowing violently; another—and it had become a gale, and when night closed, it blew a hurricane.

All that could be done for the welfare of those on board, and for the safety of the ship was done.

It blew all night, and all the next day, and even Captain James declared that it exceeded in force and continuance any storm he had ever known.

Toward night of the second day, it seemed to abate somewhat, and the opinion began to prevail that the storm was over, when the wind suddenly shifted, and a terrible fall of rain ensued, accompanied by the most terrible thunder and lightning Julian had ever witnessed.

For a time sea and sky seemed met together in a vaulted arch of intermittent fire, so closely did the blinding flashes succeed each other—while the roar of the incessant thunder was deafening.

Nothing that Julian had ever heard could furnish a comparison. He had read of the clash and clangor of opposing armies on fields of battle, of the thunder of artillery, but it seemed to him as if all the cannon in the world discharged at once, would be unheard beneath that elemental war.

He felt, however, no terror or alarm.

His awe and amazement were too great to give place to any weaker feeling.

Suddenly there was a tremendous crash—a blinding flash—with tongues of flames that swept over Julian with scorching heat, and but for the rope with which he had taken the precaution to lash himself to the bulwarks he would have fallen.

For a moment his senses were involved in Chaos; the whole world seemed split asunder, and enveloped in flames.

The ship shook and reeled like a drunken man staggering to a fall; and as Julian's senses slowly rallied, he saw some of the men prostrate upon the deck.

What had happened?

Before his mind could suggest an answer to this question, a voice forward cried out: "The ship is struck by lightning."

The tones conveyed to Julian's mind a sense of horrified despair.

Julian looked about him for the captain, and directly he saw him hurrying up from the companion-way, and go forward.

Utterly worn out by the exhausting labor of the last forty-eight hours, for he had not closed his eyes in that time, he had gone below to sleep, leaving the deck in charge of the mate.

Julian threw off the rope with which he had lashed himself to the bulwarks and busied himself in restoring those who were still suffering from the effects of the shock.

Some, however, were already beyond the aid of man.

Several who had been sheltered about the mast, or near it, were killed outright, and the mast itself had been split and splintered in the passage of the lightning to the hold.

Portions of the cargo were known to be combustible, and it was not without dread that Julian remembered this.

What if the lightning, finding no vent, had follow-

ed the keel, splintering off here and there, and had set fire to the cargo?

It was soon evident this thought was not alone in the boy's mind, for Captain James aided his efforts in arousing the stunned and bewildered crew, and proceeded to remove the main hatch with a view of ascertaining what damage had been done by the electric fluid.

A volume of smoke came pouring out which the draught, created by the ship's headway, instantly fanned into a flame.

The men recoiled with cries of terror and alarm, but the captain's tones were firm and clear, as he ordered the hatch replaced, enforcing the command by voice and example; but it was a difficult task.

The volume of flame and heat that came rolling out was appalling.

The effort was crowned with success, however, and the fire temporarily smothered, or confined below.

Holes were then bored in the deck, through which water was poured incessantly.

The men worked, fired with the captain's zeal and energy, with steady determination for hours.

Meanwhile the thunder ceased to roar, the lightning flashed no more, and the wind began to subside a little; but the deck beneath their feet had grown hotter and hotter.

Between decks, it was evident the ship was a smoldering furnace; and in a sort of dry well beneath the cabin floor, as the captain and Julian knew, were several kegs of gunpowder, for the service of the brass guns.

At sea—at night—on a raging ocean, with mountainous billows all about them, a raging fire beneath—no land in sight!

It was a situation to dismay the stoutest heart, but Julian saw no sign of fear in the captain.

With a calm voice he gave his orders, and with a firm hand he aided in their execution, and under his direction they still continued their efforts, though the smoke and heat had now become far more dangerous than the wind and the sea. But not long did they remain.

Some one remembered the powder on board and reminded his comrades.

It produced an instant panic. All ceased their work at once, and under the leadership of the mate, rushed for the boats.

In vain the captain reasoned, threatened and entreated.

The impossibility of launching a boat in such a sea would have been apparent to any but madmen; but they heeded not. They struggled into the boats, fighting with each other for precedence, lowered and cut adrift.

The first two were instantly swamped; the doomed men were swept shrieking away leeward.

The third and largest boat fared little better; it was instantly filled with water and vanished away in the darkness, with a few of the crew clinging in and about her.

Julian looked around him.

Of the whole crew, but three were left, besides the captain: the purser, the steward and himself.

The rudder had been lashed, and almost helplessly they were driving along.

A burning ship upon a heaving ocean!

The captain went forward with his night glass; Julian keeping close by his side.

Suddenly the captain uttered an exclamation, and his anxious countenance lighted up.

"Land!" he declared, "a coast! and we are driving straight upon it. Shelter yourself under the bulwark, Julian, with the purser and steward, and keep a stout heart. If the flames do not reach the powder during the next twenty minutes, we have still a bare chance for our lives!"

CHAPTER VI.

CAST UP BY THE SEA.

JULIAN stepped back as directed and crouched beneath the bulwarks.

Not another word was uttered.

The two men clinging beside him were voiceless, either with terror and apprehension, or more likely a calm resignation.

Here and there the seams, in the planking of the deck, began to bubble and smoke.

The danger from the raging furnace beneath was evidently growing more and more imminent.

With a view of escaping the heat, and the threatened peril under their feet, the two men got outside the bulwarks, and lashed themselves in the chain-rigging of the shrouds.

They told Julian to do the same, but, in this critical emergency, he preferred to be nearer the captain, and again went forward to where he was posted on the look-out. He was just in time.

He saw looming before them, dim and misty in the gray night-sky—directly in the track of the vessel, and so near that he seemed to be almost looking down upon it—a long line of shelving sand and rugged coast, over which the ocean was lashing itself in a yeasty surge.

The captain turned and shouted to the men, but his voice was not audible ten feet away, and he waved his hand for them to approach. But the signal passed unheeded; and again he beckoned.

While yet his hand was in the air, and his face turned toward them, there came a grinding, grating, crushing sound beneath the keel.

The shock threw Julian violently against the captain, who in turn recoiled against the bulwark, and with the shock followed another crash of broken masts and falling spars, and in an instant a portion of the hatches and planking were blown off, and great volumes of flame leaped into the air.

The masts had fallen to leeward and the moment Julian had regained his footing, he looked for the two men in the chains, but they were gone.

The captain and himself were alone on the burning ship.

Their position was every moment growing more and more critical.

What could they do?

The boy asked himself this question, and looked at the captain, by whose side he was standing; but he was saved the trouble of a reply.

"There came a burst of thunder sound."

Deck and vessel trembled beneath them for an instant.

There was a rushing, rising sensation—a hissing, hurdling sound, and the boy felt himself torn violently from the captain and driven forward, breathless and powerless, and falling with a great shock.

His senses left him.

When he awoke it was broad daylight, and the sun was shining down upon his upturned face.

He attempted to rise, but at the first movement, it seemed as if his limbs were dislocated; he felt stiff and bruised, and incapable of exertion.

By repeated efforts, however, his limbs and muscles resumed their duty, and he succeeded in getting upon his feet.

He had fallen upon a bed of wet sand which appeared to be just above high-water mark.

Julian looked around him.

Seen in the sunlight, it still appeared, as it had from the vessel's deck, a long stretch of barren coast, evidently an island.

His first thought was of Captain James.

He looked eagerly about him, and called his name. There was no response.

He called again and again.

There was no living thing stirring on land or sea! A portion of the wreck, blackened and bare, was visible a short distance out, marking the spot where the vessel had struck, and along the shore were many fragments, more or less blackened, of the ship and cargo, but no sign of Captain James.

Julian's heart sunk within him.

Had he alone of all that crew survived the triple disaster of hurricane, fire and wreck? Could it be? The sun was shining gloriously over all, in marked contrast with the previous terrible night, as if in compensation for the suffering of the past—a glorious morning!

"Yet that same morn looked on ruin and wreck,
And soothed a sea that lifeless swept the deck
Of some proud ship, and glorified the wave
That landward heaved the mariner's glassy grave;
Playfully rippling, shoaling goldenly o'er
Dead seamen dimly drifting to the shore!
Terrible innocent morning laughs on high,
While Ocean rocks them with its lullaby."

Forgetting all the pains of his own bruises in his grief and anxiety for the captain, Julian ran along the shore looking among the fragments of broken spars and cargo which had come ashore, for the body he hoped yet dreaded to find.

The fact that he himself had been hurled on shore by the explosion—so far upon the sand, to the highest level marked by the storm—gave him renewed courage to look, and he continued his search.

Suddenly his heart gave a great bound—was it imagination, or did he hear a voice calling him?

He paused and listened. Was he mistaken?

No—he heard it again, faintly but clearly, and ran in the direction of the sound, which brought him close to the surf.

A little further along, a cable's length back from the sea, as if it marked its utmost boundary, was a jagged ledge of rock.

It rose high and precipitous, perhaps fifty to seventy feet, with here and there openings in its front, where the fierce storms of this latitude had made breaches in its wall.

Julian ran to the foot of this ledge.

Here as elsewhere was visible the amplest evidence of the fury of the storm.

The ledge itself had been lashed midway to its very top by the crest of the tremendous waves that had thundered at its base.

Here, too, as all along the shore, were charred fragments, and blackened bales and casks that had been driven on the beach and left high out of the water.

He called the captain with all the power of his lungs.

Again came a faint voice in reply.

Looking along the face of the ledge, whence the sound seemed to proceed, Julian saw a wide fissure or opening in its front, almost above him, like the mouth of a cave; a breach made by the sea.

It seemed impossible that the captain could be within that recess, but another and still fainter cry assured him of the fact.

It was indeed Captain James imprisoned hard and fast within the fissure of the rock, where he had been strangely carried, with great force, on the top of a heavy wave, which had borne him inward from the wreck.

One of his arms had been broken, he informed Julian, and was hanging helplessly at his side, and he found himself unable to escape from the strange place which had been both his means of safety and of his imprisonment.

Otherwise, the captain told Julian, he was uninjured. The sea abating with wind and tide had left him literally high and dry.

Julian reflected for a moment.

The fissure in the rock was entirely too high to be reached either from below or above, without mechanical appliances.

He looked about him for the means.

There were plenty of spars and some cordage scattered about.

Securing one of the former, Julian succeeded in placing it sloping against the rock, with one end in

the opening, and taking a man-rope, which he found among the cordage, he shinned up the spar, and but for a timely warning from the captain would have leaped inside the fissure, which it appeared sloped backward and downward to a considerable extent, till lost in darkness.

Wind and weather had evidently hardened the outside surface of the rock, but inside the soft sandstone formation had been worn away and had become so slippery that no foothold was attainable or tenable for an instant.

Following the instructions of the captain, he made a clove-hitch, or loop, which the captain drew close under his arm, and Julian, by taking a turn of the rope around the spar, little by little, succeeded in bringing him up and out to the light of day.

He was very pale and much exhausted, but making a strong effort together, both reached the sand beneath.

But once fully in the sunlight, the captain succumbed, and fell faint and powerless.

A ghastly expression swept over his features, and Julian felt with alarm and anguish that he was dying!

CHAPTER VII.

JULIAN'S DISCOVERY.

DYING on a desert island in an unknown sea for want of nourishment!

As Julian thought this he glanced about him despairingly. His eyes fell upon boxes and bales, more or less charred and blackened, which with other merchandise strewed the shelving sand.

Might there not be found nourishment—stimulants here?

With the thought he ran to the nearest unbroken package, which proved to be a case of liquors.

He forced it open, and seizing a bottle marked "brandy," he returned to the captain's side, and knocking off the neck as the quickest way of removing the cork, he poured some of it down the captain's throat.

The effect was almost instantaneous.

The captain gasped once or twice, drew a breath, and sat up.

"Thank Heaven!" cried Julian, pressing his hand.

"What! you thought me gone, then?" said the captain, smiling. "It is only the exhaustion that is upon me, my boy," he continued, "and the pain of my arm that has weakened me. I see you have found some of the stores," he added, looking at the brandy-bottle and taking another dram.

"That is indeed fortunate. If you can now find some of the provisions, we shall be still more fortunate, and can soon strengthen ourselves to look about us. Help me up, my boy, and let us get to higher ground where we can have an outlook."

"If you will kindly wait, sir, where you are till I can look into the barrels and boxes yonder, I have no doubt I can find some provision, which will give us both more strength for the exertion."

"Very well, then," replied the captain, and Julian hurried to put his suggestion into instant execution.

Fortunately there was no necessity for going far.

With a large stone he burst in the head of a stout cask standing near, and found it filled with hams and dried beef, wrapped in paper and canvas bags and in prime condition.

Near by was another and smaller cask and a box, which, when opened, proved to be pilot-bread, but little damaged, and the inner layers perfectly dry and good.

Julian's eyes sparkled at the sight of all this provision, for he saw several more similar casks further along the beach.

He seized one of the packages of beef, and a handful of the biscuit, and hurried back to the captain, who was also pleasantly relieved by the sight. If they were to starve the time was not yet.

They rejoiced together, and whipping out his clasp-knife, Julian proceeded to slice the beef, and they made a substantial meal.

In the absence of water, at the captain's suggestion, Julian returned to the case of liquors to look for wine.

He found a bottle of port and brought it; and this agreeable substitute served admirably to wash down their dinner.

Both were very much improved and benefited by their meal, as we may suppose.

"The question of water will soon have to be entertained, Julian," said the captain, "but no doubt we will be able to find plenty in the hollows of the rocks above, for in this low latitude it rains—as our experience last night shows—with great violence. Meanwhile help me with my broken arm. I must be my own physician, with your help, and bandage it as best I can. Fortunately I have had some experience, for I was wounded in that same arm in an engagement with the Malay pirates, of whom I have told you."

With the aid of Julian he arose to his feet and by slow degrees succeeded in removing his coat.

The arm was badly swollen and powerless.

Julian, under his instructions, made another flying search and unearthed from the ruin a sailor's chest, which, on being opened, yielded the linen for which he was looking, as well as many other useful things; for a sailor's chest usually embraces the entire domestic economy of a small household, and by its aid the arm was soon dressed.

Resuming his coat, with the exception of the one sleeve, the captain declared himself, though stiff and bruised, as good as new, and able and anxious to begin an exploration of their possessions at once.

Accordingly they set out, and following the ledge of rock along the route Julian had traversed, and which ran nearly parallel to the sea line, they soon reached higher ground. For the shore gradually

rising, as they followed along the coast, it brought them out at last on a level with the top of the ledge, back of which the ground rose still higher.

They made their way to the highest point, from which they could see nearly the whole island.

It appeared to be about two miles in length, by one or more in breadth, and shaped, Julian thought, something like a fish.

From its appearance, the captain thought it had been once a mere ledge of rock, but the sands had been gradually heaped against and over it. But its exact location he could not determine without instruments or a more careful study.

That it was in the tropics was evident—for the signs of vegetation, especially at the east end (opposite to that where they had been driven ashore), were strongly marked.

The captain had never heard of this island, and was quite sure it was not laid down in the charts. That it was out of the ordinary track of vessels, he knew, and, of course, uninhabited, unless perhaps by birds and turtles.

How long it would be necessary to remain there the captain could not conjecture, but it behoved them, he told Julian, to make the most of all the resources at their command.

Everything that had come ashore must be secured and safely stored, the heavy articles where they were, by means of ropes and planking, and those easily carried brought to the higher grounds.

"At this point, where we now are, if we can secure a sail, Julian, to make us a tent, it would be a good beginning to pitch our camp. The canvas could also do double duty by catching our drinking-water when it rains. I can do very little with my broken arm, and I find myself very shaky otherwise," concluded the captain, "but I shall improve in a day or two by keeping quiet. The walk up here, even with your assistance, I find has tried me very much."

"If you could sleep, sir," said Julian, "I think it would refresh you. Let me place my coat under you, and you try to rest while I go down and make a beginning by finding the material for our tent."

With the words, Julian stripped off his coat, which had already, as he averred, become a burden to him, and insisted upon the captain using it in the manner suggested, paying no attention to his faint remonstrance.

"Be very careful of yourself," said the captain, as Julian was leaving him. "We are but two," he continued, "and must take no risk. We must do but little to-day—with something to cover us, and with what provision we need, we can wait till to-morrow. The tremendous storm through which we have passed is a surety that there will be a calm of some duration. Do not stay long," he added, as Julian was moving away.

Julian said "Ay, ay, sir," and waved his hand in response, and departed.

In descending to the beach, he took a different course from the one he had come, one more circuitous, taking him round to the back, or southerly side of the ledge, by which he was able to see more of its peculiar formation.

As he advanced he saw that the wall of rock was honeycombed, so to speak, in a number of places.

The fissures he had seen on its face extended clear through—some of them—and they were enlarged from the cavernous openings in front into excavations higher up, resembling immense caldrons.

One of these last, he especially noticed, and with some surprise, for it was the highest up, and on a level with the top of the ledge at its greatest altitude. It contained water, but whether fresh or salt, Julian did not determine, though most probably, he thought, rain-water, for it must have been fully seventy feet higher than the sea.

His attention was first attracted to this natural basin by seeing a large flock of birds rise from its margin at his approach and fly affrighted away.

As he stood for a moment looking down at this immense pool, wondering what its depth might be, he noticed, with surprise and amazement, what looked like a stone staircase leading down to the water from the opposite side.

At the distance he was from it, it appeared like the work of human hands, but he gave it no thought, for this was of course an impossibility; he was greatly interested, however, and pleased with his discovery of the basin, but remembering the work he had to do, he did not linger, but passed on.

He found the way more difficult when he began to descend by a winding path to the beach; for the ledge here extended nearly to the sea, and at high water was evidently covered at its lower extremity.

He succeeded, however, in climbing over the jagged rock, rounding the point of the ledge and getting down on the other side, he found himself not far from the spot where the captain had been so strangely imprisoned and saved.

Some portion of the sails were easily found, for they were lashed to the spars, or furlled to the yards that had been broken, and gone overboard when the ship first struck.

Fortunately, one of these lay high up—near where Julian had been washed, or thrown just as it had been clewed up and furlled.

Julian unfurled it, and stretched it out to dry, for it was still wet, and he found himself unable to carry it.

While the sail was drying, he busied himself bringing up articles still within reach of the surf, and in looking for the two men, who had disappeared, thinking perhaps their bodies might have washed ashore, but he saw nothing of them.

The sun was hot and the sail soon dried; but even then in his present weakened condition, Julian found it too heavy to carry, but by easy stages he succeeded in dragging it up the slope to the high point of ground, where he had left the captain.

He found him asleep and breathing quite regularly, much to his gratification, for he felt this was what he needed more than anything else.

Arranging a corner of the sail, by the aid of a small spar, to throw its shadow over the sleeping form of the captain, Julian softly left him, intending to return at once with provisions, including some condensed meats and vegetables, sago cheese, and jellies in sealed jars and cans which he had discovered.

"But the best laid plans of mice and men oft gang aglee," says the poet, and he might have added of boys also. For on reaching the beach, Julian's mind became diverted from this original purpose for a time, and he became the victim of a strange accident. An accident as nearly fatal as singular.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A COFFIN.

It was late in the afternoon when Captain James awoke. His first glance rested on the sail which Julian had arranged to screen him from the sun.

"Thoughtful boy," he said tenderly; and then as he looked toward the declining sun, and realized how long he had slept, he started up and called Julian's name.

There was no response.

The boy had brought the sail, but he saw about him no evidence of a second visit to the beach.

The captain's mind filled with a vague alarm, and uneasiness, and he rose to his feet.

With the exception of his arm, in which the pain had somewhat subsided, he was greatly refreshed, but he forgot his own condition entirely, in his new alarm.

He immediately started toward the beach.

The distance was not great, scarcely more than half a mile, and he was soon on the spot where he had been in the morning, but he saw no sign of Julian.

Looking along the shelving, shingly shore he saw several huge piles of blackened merchandise and portions of the ship's cargo, showing that Julian had been at work industriously, carrying out his suggestion concerning the saving and storing of everything. Yet no sign of the lad himself.

The captain called his name in tones which rung loud over the surf and sea.

The rocky ledge gave back the only echo to his cry.

What could have happened?

The captain glanced about him in anguish.

Suddenly his eye fell upon a heap of linen, and other personal effects, lying by the side of a huge sailor's chest from which he remembered Julian had taken the bandages for his arm.

The chest had evidently been emptied.

For what purpose?

The captain attempted to raise the lid, but it was fast—fast with its late contents lying outside. What did this imply?

Among the articles taken from the chest were two or three broad-bladed knives, chisels, and a small ax.

Under the impulse of a sudden thought the captain seized the ax and struck a violent blow at the lock.

It splintered the lid, parted the bolt and he raised the top.

Julian lay within, cramped, silent and motionless—a deadly pallor on his face.

The captain lifted him out, placed him on the pile of linen, and bringing water from a hollow rock near by dashed it in his face.

To his great relief, Julian, at length, opened his eyes. In a few minutes more he was able to sit up, rise and walk about, and at length explain what had happened.

He had removed the contents from the chest with a view of ascertaining its weight and whether he could move it.

It then occurred to him, a boyish idea, that the chest was large enough for his sleeping apartment, being much larger than many berths on shipboard and under the impulse of the thought, he got into it.

The lid fell down. The lock like the fabled one of the song closed with a spring, and though Julian made frantic efforts to open it, he was unable to do so.

Alarmed and horror-stricken at his situation, he had beaten the sides, and deafened himself in the circumscribed space, with calls for assistance, till at last he had fatigued and knew no more.

It had been a strange experience, and one not likely to be forgotten; so commented Captain James, as hand in hand they walked up and down the beach, looking at the different things that had come ashore.

But the declining sun warned them not to tarry, so taking such things as they most needed, including the ax, some small spars, clothing and provisions, they returned to their camping-ground.

Working with energy, they soon improvised tent-poles from the small spars, set them firmly in the ground, and stretched the sail over them and securely fastened it, inclosing three sides.

If not altogether tight, it had the advantage of being spacious and water-proof.

Into this comfortable tent they gathered such things as they had brought up from the beach.

Having thus made preparations for a pleasanter night than the last, they partook of a light supper, and having returned thanks to the All-Father for having brought them through so many dangers and perils, Julian and the captain lay down to rest.

Early next morning, Julian was up and out to see the sun rise.

He was still feeling somewhat stiff and sore, as also was the captain, but both were in remarkable spirits, when the terrible loneliness of their situation is considered—on a desert island in an unknown sea!

While at breakfast, Julian told Captain James of his discovery of the great caldron-like cistern of

water and the birds he had seen rising from it, which the latter heard with much satisfaction.

He judged with Julian, that this must be fresh water, as whatever spray might be dashed over the ledge in stormy weather would be insufficient to fill the basin at that height.

The fact, too, of its being a resort for birds, would indicate that it was fresh, and that it was seldom dry.

A very desirable accession to their present limited stores. They would visit it together by and by, said the captain.

After breakfast they went down to the beach and brought away more of such things as were likely to be first needed, bringing out of the surf many additional articles thrown up by the waves during the night.

That portion of the wreck which had been left standing—the bow and forward part of the ship—was still hard and fast, and likely to remain so until decay and time should do their work.

One of her heavy iron cables had run out and hung over her side, sloping inland, as if in mockery of an assumed anchor, for so deeply were her timbers imbedded in sand that no anchor would ever be needed—were it possible—to hold them stronger.

They busied themselves during the forenoon in this manner, and in collecting in piles, as Julian had done yesterday, the boxes and bales, and broken-up cargo, such as were movable.

In the afternoon, Julian, at Captain James's suggestion, led the way around the point of the ledge, by the route he had come yesterday, when he made his great discovery, and up its craggy sides to the rock-built cistern.

From the side of their present approach they found a sort of natural graded walk leading up to it, which seemed to suggest that at some former period people had landed from boats below, and made their way up to it for a supply of water.

Reaching the top, they were welcomed by another startled flight of birds, which rose with a great rush of air and noise of wings, and flew away seaward.

"If we only had a gun and ammunition," said Julian, looking after them, "how easy it would be to provide ourselves with game every day."

"Yes," answered Captain James, "but we are hardly likely to find either the one or the other, unless some box or chest as yet unopened and watertight, should yield them—which though possible, is hardly probable."

"I have seen only the one chest from which I took the linen," said Julian, in response, "and the big knives were the most dangerous weapons in that, but of the many others on board it would seem impossible they should all be burned but the one. Perhaps we shall find more among the ruins of the forecastle if the sea gets low enough for me to venture out to her."

Julian was interrupted in his eager suggestions by a sudden exclamation from Captain James.

They had reached, and were looking down the flight of steps the boy had seen the day previous.

To the captain they appeared as they had to Julian, as if hewn from the solid rock, and he turned a shade paler.

"Julian," said he, solemnly, "I see we are not the first comers on this island as I had thought. These steps were made by man."

CHAPTER IX.

A STRANGE NIGHT VISITANT—THE TERRIBLE NAME.

The steps led down into the water.

Julian ran down, dipped up some in his hand and tasted it.

It was a little brackish, he declared, looking up, but still evidently rain-water.

"The violent hurricane that has brought us here," said Captain James, "has thrown the spray clear over the ledge, which may account for the brackish taste. People have lived here before us," he continued, "and this has probably been their reservoir, and a magnificent one it is."

"But the steps, sir, must have taken a long time to finish," said Julian, coming up again.

"No doubt; it is apparent that they are the work of some one who had time hanging very heavily on his hands and wanted something to do. Some shipwrecked sailor waiting for relief probably."

"If ships were in this neighborhood they would have no difficulty in getting all the water they need here. We are fortunate in this respect at least—very fortunate."

But we must make a careful tour of the island; quite likely these people, whoever they were, who made these steps, and cleared this natural cistern, must have lived here, and," concluded the captain, "we shall find other evidences of their existence."

"Perhaps it was a haunt for pirates, sir," suggested Julian, "and if so, there might be buried gold to be found here."

"I never imagined the freebooters kept much gold to fight over, my lad," said Captain James, smilingly. "But it is of course quite possible this may have been one of their stations or ports of convenience. We can neither prove or disprove that."

"Enough of this, however, for the present. Let us return to our tent. Upon our activity now, may depend our escape from the island hereafter."

"I think so too," said Julian.

"We must hoist a signal from the tallest spar we can erect, for, although, as I judge, entirely out of the beaten track of vessels, some ship like our own may be blown off her voyage, but more fortunate, may have succeeded in riding out the storm, and may pass within sight. We must also gather material for a fire that we may light as a beacon on dark nights; luckily I had some matches in a water-proof safe; in short we must leave no means untried to endeavor to make known our situation."

While thus giving utterance to his views on the subject uppermost in both their minds, the captain slowly led the way homeward, as the spot where they had pitched their tent might be called.

That night they sat up a little later than the previous one.

The moon was round and full, and shining gloriously.

The heavens were cloudless.

The ocean like silvered glass reflected every star in the clear dome about it.

The exceeding beauty of the night made both of our castaways wakeful, and they sat and talked for hours—or at least Captain James talked and Julian listened, for unlike some boys Julian was a good listener.

He told the boy of the many years of his early life he had spent at sea, of how he had gradually risen to become a part owner in many vessels, how he had retired from active service as a sailor, how he had spent many years in China, Japan, and India, and how finally he had again taken to the sea only the year before with a resolve to live and die on the ocean.

Julian could have sat and listened to the captain all night, without a thought of weariness, for there was a fascination about his real life narrative, and a personal interest in his manner of telling the story that was peculiarly attractive.

Many times he wondered, as he dwelt on these recitals of adventure in India and the East, whether his uncle, Captain Kidd, was not like Captain James, for his experiences seemed to Julian to be somewhat similar. And he ardently wished in his own heart that when he found his uncle, that rich and eccentric relative might be such another generous, whole-souled man as this.

From this he fell to speculating on how long they would be compelled to stay on the island, and asked the captain some questions on this point.

The captain could not, and would not say; he had evidently formed no conjectures on that subject.

He said, however, that for various reasons, he sincerely hoped their stay there would not be long.

They were just on the point of turning in for the night, when a strange sound came to their ears from the lower, or wooded end of the island, perhaps a mile and a half distant—a sound that had in it something so peculiar, so startling, that neither could say what it was like. But both agreed there was in it nothing human.

Could it be possible that there were wild beasts on the island?

They listened anxiously for its repetition, and sat for an hour with hushed breath in an attitude to catch the slightest sound. But nothing further came to their watchful ears.

But for the fact that both had heard it distinctly, they would have doubted the evidence of their own senses.

What could have caused it—that strange, wild cry?

And with this thought uppermost in their minds, they instinctively reflected on their means of defense.

They had the small ax, some carpenters' tools, and two or three seamen's knives, but no fire-arms.

How swiftly then, Julian's mind reverted to the brass bow-chasers, and the swivel-gun amidships, that had constituted the formidable armament of the Hong Kong, and how ardently he wished they had that swivel-gun at least now.

Posted right there by their tent, he thought it would be such a capital thing to repel intruders—whether beast, reptile, or pirates. But with a sigh he remembered that the gun must be now fathoms—fathoms under where the deep sea was rolling.

Hearing no repetition of that strange cry, however, and the hour getting late, as they judged by the moon coursing high in the heavens, they turned in for the night, and slept, let us trust, the sleep of the just. Not, however, till they had determined to make a careful tour of the island the next day.

Next morning they were up early, as behooves those having much to do, and after breakfast returned to the beach to resume their labors of the previous day—the labor of getting the stores and material from the ship removed above high-water mark.

Here a great surprise awaited them.

They found the cask of hams and dried beef, which Julian had opened, overturned, and more than half gone, and the box of pilot-bread he had also opened, had been mostly devoured, and the box itself bearing dents like the marks of strong teeth, was crushed up like an egg-shell.

For a minute after making this discovery, the two castaways stood looking at each other in silent amazement.

It was indeed startling.

Then came the remembrance of that strange cry they had heard at the east end of the island.

It was manifest that the unusual flavor of so much provision and preserved meats, especially in that low latitude, had attracted some strange, wild thing to share it.

The same thought was evidently in the minds of both.

"It must have been some sort of sea-monster, peculiar to the tropics," said Julian. "Could it have been a sea-lion?"

"I should say not," replied Captain James. "They belong to cold climates I believe, and no iceberg would be likely to drift as low down as this latitude, even if they were in the habit of going to sea in that fashion."

The captain walked up and down with an unusually thoughtful face, while Julian looked about him, endeavoring to find tracks or signs that would indicate the nature of the animal, but without finding any strongly marked.

Just there the shore had a rocky and shingly surface, the rocks being flaked off from the ledge, and the sand thrown up by the sea, and being within reach of the high tide, would have obliterated all footprints had there been any.

"I can't make it out," Julian at length declared. "I can't think what sort of an animal it can be—if it has legs it has left no trace of them here."

"All that men in any circumstances can do, Julian," said Captain James, "must be done at once. A danger unknown is the more to be dreaded, and I see enough to warn me that we must protect ourselves as strongly as possible from this. We must first look after the stores and provisions; the loose packages and a few small articles we must take to our camp, and those in bulk we will secure by timbers, stones and ropes, as well as we can where they are."

In accordance with this programme they labored until they went to dinner, when Julian reminded Captain James of his purpose to explore the island.

"I had not forgotten it," said the captain, "and we may as well start at once. If there is anything else besides the visitor here last night to endanger our residence on the island, it will be best for us to know it without delay."

This was Julian's opinion also, and arming themselves, as best they could, with two knives each, and the small ax, they started.

They were not long in reaching the east or wooded end of the island, and entered the grove.

There were many birds lodged therein of various kinds and sizes, who, startled by what they evidently considered these stranger birds, took wing, whirring away with a great noise, some circling along the coast, and others flying toward the other end of the island, giving the signal flag at the camp a very wide berth, as something new and suspicious.

Julian and the captain penetrated this grove a short distance, and were surprised to find in its interior a broad inlet like a small lake, with a narrow opening to the sea beyond.

On the north shore of this inlet, there were several huge rocks rising steep and precipitous from the water, evidently a continuation of the same ledge upon which the island was formed—with the green foliage which skirted the background, and the still, glassy surface of the inlet in front, and the sun just gilding the tops, which were on a level with the tallest trees—these brown, bald rocks presented a fit study for an artist.

"If we only had a boat here!" exclaimed Julian, enthusiastically, "what a splendid sail we could have."

The captain smiled gravely.

They were standing on the margin of the inlet, its shelving bank of shingle showing here, as outside, the action of the tide.

"While wishing for a boat, Julian," said the captain, "we might as well wish for a ship, for one could anchor here in ease and safety, and in high tide there would be no difficulty in getting over the bar opposite, if indeed at any time."

"Yes," said Julian, "and that rock yonder, the lower one I mean, would make a capital wharf; let us go around to it, please."

The captain followed him as he eagerly led the way, but Julian reached it first, and suddenly turned toward him, waving his hat and uttering wild exclamations of surprise and delight.

"What is it?" said the captain, as he quickened his steps, and in a moment more he was alongside of him.

Julian was pointing at something at his feet, by the edge of the rock, near the water.

It was a large iron ring, such as is used by vessels in making fast—passing through a staple—which staple was driven hard and fast into a hole drilled in the rock.

Ring and staple were incrustated with rust, and had evidently been there a century at least.

"You were right, Julian," said the captain, as he surveyed this evidence of past occupation of the island. "Others besides you have thought this a capital wharf, for this inlet has certainly been at some time a ship's harbor and anchorage."

"Whose could it have been, sir?"

As Julian asked the question, still looking about him, he suddenly added a shrill exclamation.

Captain James turned quickly toward him.

The boy was looking up at the perpendicular face of the tallest rock, and pointing upward.

Ten or twelve feet above their heads was a name, and figures, done in old English:

"CAPTAIN KIDD, 1698."

CHAPTER X.

THE SKELETON OF THE ROCK.

FOR some moments they stood in silence, staring upward at the rock and its inscription.

A terrible name!

How came it here on this solitary island?

This was the question that was in Julian's mind.

But Captain James did not seem especially startled at the discovery.

Perhaps the disaster which had overtaken his own stanch vessel and his stout-hearted crew, and his preservation here, left no room for further wonderment at the mysterious dispensations of Providence.

"You have found Captain Kidd, my boy!" he said, at length.

Julian turned quickly toward him.

"But not my uncle," he replied.

"No," said the captain, in a tone half inquiry, half assertion; "the date yonder conclusively shows that."

"But I may find him yet; this makes me more hopeful."

"Very likely," said the captain, who was looking earnestly at the top of the rock, and examining its

sides. "I think, Julian," he continued, "there are other discoveries to be made here. That rock must be accessible; it would seem to furnish a better outlook. Let us see."

Julian followed him around the base of the rock, and they forced their way through the undergrowth of small trees and shrubbery that grew at the back.

In front, as we have seen, the rock was precipitous, rising with a perpendicular face to the height of the tallest tree; but at the back it sloped with a gradual descent toward the sea.

They made their way up this slope till they found themselves cut off by an irregular fissure in the rock, separating it at the top entirely from the larger half in front—a fissure which might have been made by some convulsion of nature, or some violent upheaval of the whole island.

It must have been twenty feet in width, by considerably more than that in depth.

There seemed at first no way of crossing it, till Julian suggested the felling of trees, many of which, the size of a man's arm or larger, grew in the crevices of the cliff.

The suggestion was at once acted upon, and two or three of these being felled across the chasm, they made their way over it, continuing their ascent of the rock, and were soon at the top.

It was very irregular, one side appearing much higher than the other.

There were small trees growing on one side of the summit, which at first effectually hid what was destined to subsequently prove one of their most important discoveries.

A closer examination of the higher portion of the rock proved it to be an artificial wall, having a rude doorway opening into a small apartment, partially hewn out of the solid stone.

Only a small portion was sheltered by a roof—about one-half—the other half having apparently been supplied by canvas or wood, of which, however, no trace remained.

There was a small round window, like a port-hole, commanding a view of the little harbor below, and the outlet to the same, as well as the sea beyond.

Evidently this had once been the dwelling-place of man.

Many of the stones were hewn, some of them had fallen, and all were more or less overgrown with moss.

In a small recess, on the sheltered side, hewn out of the solid rock, like a berth on shipboard, they saw where the former occupant had slept.

Yea! where all that was mortal of him still slept, for in this recess were the bones—the skeleton of a human being.

Bleached and whitened by storm and time they glared ghastly in the sunlight.

Julian, who, boy-like, had rushed eagerly through the low-browed doorway of this apartment, fell back in awe before this revelation of the past.

Captain James's face retained its usual tranquillity. He would not show to Julian the discouraging aspect this gave to their hope of escape from the island.

"Who could he have been?" asked Julian, going around and looking in at the small window.

"It is useless now to inquire," said the captain, "whether he dates back to the year engraved on the rock, or whether he was a castaway, like ourselves, at a later period; it would be impossible to know without further discoveries."

"It may be he was marooned. A careful search may furnish more particulars of his history."

Julian was already looking about him.

On the very highest point of the rock he discovered a hole which must have been drilled with infinite labor, probably for the purpose of holding a flag-staff or signal pole.

The area of the whole top of the rock was not much greater than that of a large house, and Julian did not take long to examine it; meanwhile the captain inside had made a further discovery.

Beneath the skeleton was a movable slab, wherein, no doubt, would be found, he suggested, whatever treasures or information the unfortunate had left behind him.

Eager as Julian was for new discoveries, he hesitated now. He asked the captain if it would be right to move the bones.

"Certainly," was the response; "we will come tomorrow, bringing a spade, and give them burial."

"They must have been here a long time," said Julian, "for with the exception of what seems to be the metallic buttons, there is not a fragment left of anything he wore."

The captain, who had come out and was walking up and down outside with an air of abstraction, made no immediate response.

"It is growing late, Julian," he finally said, "and we must return to our camp."

As they were returning, a more careful examination of the chasm in the rock revealed niches, cut for the hands and feet like a narrow ladder or staircase, hewn in the side of the rock, difficult to any but a sailor, in getting down or climbing up.

They descended this way, as it made the distance much shorter, and in a minute more were standing on the shore wharf.

"It must have been this man," said Julian, as they set out on their return to camp, "who made the stone steps at the great natural cistern."

"No doubt," said the captain, thinking how hopeless was the prospect of relief when this man's long imprisonment here was considered. For it must have taken years to have accomplished that work.

The extent and surprise of the discoveries just made, of the skeleton, of the rocky dwelling, and of this having been a haunt of Captain Kidd—the world famous Kidd—drove from Julian's mind all thought of that strange, wild cry they had heard there the previous night.

They had nearly reached their camp before it occurred to him, and he mentioned it to the captain.

"I had not forgotten it," was the response; "indeed it was strongest in my thoughts when at the top of the rock."

"What do you think it could have been?" asked Julian; "not turtles nor birds?"

"No," said the captain, "whatever it is it does not come in the day, but makes its visits in the night-time."

"If it were something dangerous to us," said Julian, thoughtfully, "would we not be safer ourselves living at the top of the rock, especially as that chasm would keep almost anything from reaching us—like the moats of some old castle?"

"I have already thought of that also," said the captain, "and to-morrow we may put it in force. It will be a bright moonlight evening, and nothing is likely to disturb us to-night, at least not without my knowing it," he added, in a low tone to himself.

After supper they sat up and talked till rather a late hour, as on the previous night.

The captain going out several times to look at the sea and sky, and gaze somewhat anxiously toward the east end of the island.

Though they listened attentively from time to time they heard nothing of the sound that had been so ominous, and wondering drowsily what strange, ferocious thing it could have been, Julian fell asleep, and in his sleep had a singular dream.

CHAPTER XI.

JULIAN'S DREAM—THE TERRIBLE EYES.

IT was the first time he had dreamed of home since leaving it, and it was astonishing how vividly the whole scene came back to him.

The old homestead, the house wherein he was born, the ever-changing sea, upon which he had so often gazed.

He looked in expectation of seeing the old house lonely and deserted, for even in his dream he remembered he had left it, but to his surprise he saw the rooms lighted up; figures were flitting to and fro, and strange faces he could not recognize looked from the old, familiar windows.

While he was wondering what this meant, he saw the well-known figure of old Benny Haven, but looking younger, coming vigorously down the roadway.

He walked like a man aroused to unusual energy, like one having a clearly defined purpose in view. He went straight toward the house and had nearly reached it when the cottage-door opened from within and Squire Lawson stopped over the threshold. His brow darkened at the sight of Uncle Benny, but he took two or three hasty steps forward and in a moment they were standing face to face.

Though Julian, in his dream, in defiance of all politeness, strained his senses to the utmost to hear what was said, no word came to him.

But that both men were angry and excited he could easily see, for their hands were clinched and their gestures violent—particularly those of the squire.

While Julian, in his dream, was wondering what the issue would be he saw the airy figure of a young girl come running from the white sea beach, where he had so often walked, and hurrying toward the two men, she appeared to utter some remonstrance.

But the angry disputants heeded her not.

How well he knew that lithe figure! Not even in a dream could he forget it.

It was Maggie Lawson.

She was yet a dozen paces away when Squire Lawson raised his heavy cane, and struck old Benny a violent blow.

It made Julian recoil in sympathy even in sleep.

The lion-like nature of the old man was at once aroused, and with an activity that would have been surprising even in a younger man, he seized the Squire by the throat, shaking him to and fro like a man of straw, and hurled him with one final effort prostrate to the earth.

Maggie threw up her hands with a cry of terror, and so intense was Julian's sympathy with the act and actor that he uttered a loud cry.

That cry awakened him.

He sprang to his feet confused, bewildered, amazed to find it all a dream.

To his additional surprise, he found the captain sitting up and intently looking out of the opening in the tent as if watching.

At Julian's outcry he sprang to his feet and coming toward him seized his hand.

"A dream! a dream, my boy," he said, soothingly.

"Yes, sir," said Julian, drawing a long breath, still looking about him as if he half-expected to see Uncle Benny and Maggie again, so vividly did they appear to him.

"Try and sleep again," continued the captain. "I find I am a little restless myself to-night, and will walk up and down outside."

He parted the canvas, which served for a doorway, and went out.

Julian lay down again, but for some time could not sleep.

The vividness of his dream, the remarkable distinctness with which it had all come to him—like a picture upon the wall—had turned his thoughts in a new direction.

He was not superstitious, but he began to wonder if in a dream like this there might not be much truth; and he sought to recall matters at home, and to think what had transpired from the moment of his leaving there.

He wondered if the Squire had attempted to enforce his authority as guardian—if he had actually taken possession of the homestead—and if old Ben-

ny would permit him to do so; and then he fell to wondering about Maggie, whether she would be blamed for visiting Uncle Benny so much, and if the accident of his meeting her at the old sailor's would be considered an offense, and finally he fell asleep.

When he awoke it was hardly yet day.

He looked for the captain but he was absent. He listened for his footsteps; but only the sound of the distant surf, and the waves rolling in on the beach, came to him.

He arose, dressed and went out of the tent.

The bright glow on the eastern horizon showed that genial day was breaking on land and sea.

He walked all around the tent, but saw nothing of Captain James.

Thinking that perhaps he had gone down to the great basin for water, Julian went in that direction. Midway to it his attention was attracted by a vast quantity of birds that were filling the air with their cries.

They were hovering over the cliff, coming up from below with great velocity, and darting down again with equal force.

Their movements were so unusual that he changed his course and descended to the ledge, coming out to the face of the cliff in that direction.

To his surprise the birds did not appear to heed his approach, but continued to dart back and forth with the same discordant cries.

Wondering what the explanation of this could be, Julian approached the face of the cliff, which was here perpendicular, and looked over.

At first he saw nothing unusual. But ten or twelve feet below him was a round hole in the face of the cliff, perhaps two feet in diameter—one of the many fissures peculiar to the ledge, but rounder and smoother than any he had ever seen.

It was toward this opening in the rock that the birds seemed directing all their rage and outcry.

Something must be in there Julian thought. What could it be? some wild animal?

A thrill of dread, as he remembered their defenseless condition, swept over him; but Julian was brave, as we know, and thought wisely, that a danger known could be far more easily met than one of which he knew nothing.

If he could only see what it was, he said to himself.

He lay down on the very edge of the cliff and stretching himself over as far as he dared, strove to peer into the darkness beyond the opening.

In this endeavor the birds seemed to recognize him as an ally, and ceased a moment their wild cries, hovering about in such numbers and so near that a single sweep of his arm would have brought down dozens.

For a minute he gazed down steadily into the fissure, but could see nothing but the grayish brown of the slimy rock.

But, suddenly, something at the bottom of the fissure seemed to move.

Was it imagination?

He looked again, and slowly from out the background of dusky hue, he saw two glittering eyes fixed upon him with a terrible upward glare.

He quivered from head to foot.

A cold shudder ran through him.

He recalled with horrified intensity the fascinating, serpent-like eyes in the den of the land-shark. Of that terrible struggle to retain his consciousness at that time when he felt those long, merciless fingers plucking at his breast.

What terror there was even in the remembrance.

He shook like one in an ague, and nearly fell from the cliff.

Only by the strongest effort did he recover his equilibrium.

He succeeded in gaining his feet, and without a glance behind, he ran at full speed for the tent. Not till he was safe within did he draw a long breath, and even then he looked out as if half expecting to see those terrible eyes coming up the slope.

He looked about him for the captain, but he had not yet returned.

Where was he?

Had he gone to the skeleton rock, and if so should he follow him?

CHAPTER XII.

THE CAPTAIN'S VISIT TO THE WRECK—THE DESTROYER.

HAD Julian been less excited by his discovery of the saurian, reptile or beast, whichever it might be, that had so startled him, and looked down along the shingly beach below, where they had left the stores, he would have seen the confirmation of a visit from the creature still more devastating than that of the night previous.

Boxes and casks were crushed into splinters and their contents scattered, and even the stout cans containing preserved meats were broken and some of them emptied.

He would also have seen, had he looked behind him when he ran, Captain James standing on the broken bowsprit of the dismantled wreck, waving his hand to him in warning; for the captain had made an earlier discovery than Julian. A discovery the fear of which had been in his thoughts all the day previous—had troubled him unpleasantly when at the rock after finding the skeleton—that had kept him wakeful and watchful all the night.

For he had discovered the cause of that strange cry, and what it was that had wrought such havoc among their scanty stores.

Agreeing with Julian in the possibility of fire-arms—pistols at least, being found on board, the captain had taken advantage of the low tide, and his wakefulness, to make his way out to the wreck, and while there had made his discovery and found his retreat shoreward cut off for a time.

But he had been more than repaid otherwise for his labor.

Quite a portion of the fore-castle was still remaining, though, of course, charred and blackened, and here he found two or three seamen's chests.

A search of these revealed many things likely to prove useful, should their stay on the island be prolonged.

Among them he found what he was now most anxious for—a double-barreled gun—one barrel rifled for ball cartridge, and a pair of heavy navy revolvers.

He was fortunate, too, in finding ammunition for these in a copper, water-tight flask. Placing the revolvers and ammunition in his pockets, and with the gun slung upon his shoulder, the captain was about leaving the wreck when he discovered the presence on the beach of their mighty visitant.

To have ventured ashore then in the moonlight would have been madness, and he resolved to wait quietly till the setting of the moon, and the dark hours preceding the dawn, should give a better hope of escaping observation. But wearied out he fell asleep where he was, only awakening just in time to see by the growing daylight Julian running from the cliff. And now, at every hazard, he determined to land at once, for Julian, it was evident, had discovered the monster, and would be doubly alarmed at his absence.

Since he had come out to the wreck the tide had risen to the full, and landing was much more difficult.

But Captain James was not the man to hesitate. With his weapons placed easy to his hand, the captain descended to the float—one of the hatchways—and noiselessly paddled along the shore till he was opposite the camp where the distance was much less.

He landed and hurried up the slope, being met by Julian, who had grown much alarmed, as he had anticipated, at his absence.

At sight of the double-gun Julian uttered an exclamation of delight, only exceeded when the captain took the revolvers from his pockets and presented him one of them.

"Oh, sir," he gasped excitedly, "we have immediate use for them. Are they loaded?"

"They are, and we are that much better off than we were. Your suggestion about searching the wreck was a good one. I felt yesterday it was, perhaps, our only chance of safety—either that or the isolation of the skeleton rock."

"You know, then," said Julian, "the terrible discovery I have just made?"

"I do," said the captain, "but even with these weapons we must take the enemy at a disadvantage, or we shall be powerless. We may cope with some danger even-handed, but not with it."

"Now, then, is the time," said Julian, eagerly. "I looked right down upon it, sir; such terrible eyes. Indeed, sir, I could see nothing else."

"All the better," said the captain; "if we can still see them, it will be our best opportunity. Come! but stay, I will load the gun first."

He took out the ammunition, and proceeded to load both barrels.

He then made another examination of the pistols, and then set forth by the route Julian had taken.

By this time the sun had risen and was shining brilliantly, sending long lanes of shimmering light far over the sea, and tipping the waves with little jets of burning gold; but Julian's glance was not upon the sun nor sea, as they advanced. He was looking along the top of the ledge.

"The birds are gone, sir," he said abruptly. "What does that mean?"

"It means, perhaps," said the captain, quickening his steps, "that their enemy and ours has taken his departure. Let us see."

They reached the cliff, the spot where Julian had been, and, as he had said, the birds were gone.

Very noiselessly they approached the verge and looked over.

Those terrible eyes were no longer visible, but far out to sea, beyond the point of rocks, there was a long line in the water, which cut the rippling waves, and from that direction came an occasional discordant cry—the same they had heard in the night.

Julian turned toward Captain James, to call his attention to it, but he had already observed it.

"He is off for to-day," said the captain; "we can rest in peace till the next tide. He is sure to come again. No wonder we find no living thing on the island."

"The poor fellow at the top of the rock must have led a terrible life while he lived; but for the rock indeed, and its isolation, his existence would have been brief. For us, we are better prepared to cope with it; but we must have all the advantage possible besides. It will be a battle to the death, whichever wins."

"We must begin by removing our stores to the top of the rock," concluded the captain, "or we shall soon have none left. See what the monster has eaten and destroyed already," he added, looking down toward the beach.

"Would it not be better, sir," said Julian, "to go on board the wreck, and take up our quarters?"

"Not to remain," said the captain, "as it will be liable at any time to break up; but to-night we will take up our position there, if on reflection it seems desirable, and watch the enemy."

"But why not make it our fort, and attack him from it?" asked Julian, eagerly.

The captain smiled gravely, and shook his head.

"Not strong enough as it is," he said, "but it might be strengthened. We will see. But let us return to breakfast. This watching and fasting and anxiety has left me very hungry, and a boy's appetite is always good, I believe, eh Julian?" concluded the captain cheerfully.

Julian assented, and they retraced their steps.

"What do you make it out to be, sir?" asked Julian, as they went along, thinking of the two terrible eyes he had seen. "It can't be a wild beast—is it an alligator?"

"No," said the captain, looking at him steadily, as if marking the effect of his words. "It is an enormous sea-serpent!"

CHAPTER XIII.

UNCLE BENNY TO THE FORE.

DREAMS are not always true, nor on the other hand are they always false!

So wrote some years ago a well-known author, whose wide range of experience and keenness of observation gave him an air of authority; and in the case of Julian's singular dream, these words may have application.

For something had actually transpired at home very similar to what had been reproduced in his vision.

No sooner had Squire Lawson definitely learned of Julian's departure, than acting on the authority he held as the boy's legally qualified guardian, he proceeded to take possession of his property.

The first intimation of Julian's purpose was conveyed to him by his daughter Maggie after her return from the accidental meeting at old Benny Haven's.

That the squire's state of mind at hearing of Julian's departure, or running away, as he called it, was not a pleasant one may be inferred from the fact that he punished Maggie for bringing the information, by locking her up and ordering her fed on bread and water for forty-eight hours, as if she had been an accessory before the fact.

Largely conducive to this wrathful state of mind was no doubt the supposable fact that Julian had taken with him all the ready money of the late widow Adams—upon which it would seem Squire Lawson had looked rather gloatingly.

That the boy would come to no good, and that he would never return, the squire did not hesitate to assert; but in this, as in some other cases, it is not unlikely that the wish was father to the thought. At any rate he took possession of the property, secured a tenant for it forthwith, and before Uncle Benny Haven was aware what was going on, they had taken full possession, and when he did make a final attempt to secure legal recognition as Julian's guardian, as being chosen by the lad, he found himself laughed at for his trouble.

Julian's declaration of choice not having been made before a magistrate, had no validity in law, consequently the old sailor found himself powerless to act in Julian's behalf.

This did not prevent him, however, going to Squire Lawson and protesting very strongly against his proceedings, to which protest the squire merely laughed, and snapped his fingers in derision, using rather contemptuous language, finally ordering Uncle Benny out of his magisterial presence.

By this time the lion-like nature of the old man was aroused, and he resented both the words and the manner of their utterance in a manly, if not wholly magisterial manner, which left the squire prostrate and bleeding at the nose on the floor.

Hurrying home with the step of a young man, after this encounter, Uncle Benny found an arrival at the cabin.

It was that of the letter Julian had written him, stating his purpose to sail in the Hong Kong, his encounter with the land-shark and other matters.

And while he was reading the letter for the second time there came another arrival—that of Maggie Lawson.

She brought the information that the squire had gone in great excitement for a constable to arrest him, and her love for the old sailor, and her fear of what might happen, had brought her swiftly with the news.

But the old sailor was now fully aroused, and as he expressed it, alive from claw to ear, and not to be caught napping.

Had he been thirty years younger, he could not have proceeded with greater celerity or more deliberate calmness than now, to carry out the purpose he had in mind.

These two arrivals, he told Maggie, decided his course, and he proceeded at once to pack up a few articles in a small bundle for a temporary absence.

He showed Maggie the letter from Julian, and the messages the lad had sent to her, which made the young girl glow with delight. But her eyes suddenly filled with tears.

"You are going to him, Uncle Benny?" she said.

"That is my purpose, Maggie," declared the old sailor, with great deliberation, completing as he spoke the filling of a large money-belt from his money-box—the same he had shown Julian.

"I may not be in time," he continued, "to find him before he sails and bring him back here, but I shall try it at least, and I am taking with me money sufficient to follow him if need be to the end of the world."

"Oh, if I could only go with you!" cried Maggie, clasping her hands.

"There is no reason that I know why you can't, Maggie," said Uncle Benny, "except, of course, the objection of the old frayed snifter, the squire, and he's only your step-father, at most, who married your mother for her money, and she died a year after with his treatment, as everybody knows, or I wouldn't mention it," he added, half apologetically.

"No reason for you not going if you wish except that," continued the old sailor, completing his preparatory packing up, laying down the bundle on a locker, and taking her hands. "Why, how has the old shark been treating you lately?" he questioned.

Her eyes filled again at the picture this question conjured up.

"Rather cruelly, Uncle Benny, if I may tell you the truth. He kept me locked up for two days after Julian went away, scolding me very much for my visits here, and threatening me severely if I came in future."

"Ay!" said the old man, "it's as I thought. Then why not go with me, Maggie. If I have no legal right over Julian, me loving him as I do, and he earnestly requesting it, then the squire certainly has none over you, hating you as he must, by the token of his unkindness. I don't see why this rule won't work both ways. Can you?"

"Oh, sir, I am so young, and without experience, that I don't know what to think."

"No matter, I know—and if you choose to go along with me you shall be my grandchild, Maggie, and the heir to all I leave behind me."

"Oh, Uncle Benny, you don't expect to die?"

"Me! Do I look like dying? It's allus the other chap that's a-going to die! I mean to live seventy or eighty years yet, and shall probably beat old Parr. He was a hundred and fifty-six. But I mustn't stand swinging my jawing-tackle here; time's precious! Come! It will be a fine trip for you, and you will see the world. Soon's I find Julian I shall bring him back here, and with his authority we will rout the old hippopotamus in his own law-jingle! Will you go? say the word, Maggie."

"I will," she declared, decisively.

"Good, my lass! You are already in the proper toggery, and we have only to start."

He seized the small bundle from the locker and threw open the door.

"Good-by, uncle," said a hoarse voice, that startled them both.

"Why, blow me, if it isn't old Chock-a-block!" declared Uncle Benny, recovering from his start of surprise, and looking at the parrot. "I can't leave him. He must go too. You can take charge of him, Maggie, having nothing else to carry."

He took down the parrot, in its wire cage, and handed it to the young girl, picked up the bundle he had laid down, closed and barred the single window of the cabin, and they came out together.

"It is very lucky," he declared, as he locked the stout oaken door behind him, and placed the key in his pocket. "The tide is at the full, and the schooner yonder just ready to sail. We must be nimble now, Maggie," he added, taking the route Julian had taken leading down to the beach below, almost as briskly as Julian himself could have done.

They were not a moment too soon, for the schooner was already casting off her shore-lines as they reached the wharf; and no sooner were they on board than she shook out her reefs to a favoring breeze, and with every stitch of canvas drawing below and aloft, stood seaward.

They reached New York, as Julian had done before them, without accident.

It had been years since the old sailor had been in the great city, but no land-shark was likely to make any attempts to tackle him.

To Maggie, however, the sight of the famous metropolis left a more indelible impression, if possible than it had upon Julian; but under the protecting care of the simple-hearted old sailor, she felt no apprehension.

They went at once to the pier of the Hong Kong.

They were too late by some hours; she had already sailed, and all hope of meeting Julian here was at an end.

Uncle Benny did not hesitate. Men of his mold never do.

He looked about him for the first vessel to follow.

A ship lying at a wharf adjacent was getting ready for departure.

A flag was flying at her fore.

It was the Punjab.

It will be remembered she was to have sailed the next day after Julian's arrival.

She had done so. But the carelessness of the skipper of a transport that was coming into the harbor, as they dropped down the lower bay, had carried away a portion of her bulwark, and the Punjab returned to her wharf to make examination for further possible damage.

Happily, however, it had been no more serious, and she was now ready to sail.

As the Punjab was up for Calcutta, as well as Bombay—and he could find no other vessel going direct to Hong Kong under some weeks—Uncle Benny concluded to join her.

He accordingly went to the Shipping Office of the company that Julian had visited, produced his money-belt, which he had secured about his waist, and took tickets for himself and grandchild, as he termed Maggie.

"For the first time in his life, proposing," he told the man of parchment face, confidentially, "to go as a gen'l'man passenger."

They were promptly on board, taking the parrot with them, which made itself at once a familiar favorite by saluting the men on deck, with: "Aho! aho!" at its very hoarsest.

The Punjab sailed without further loss of time, and that afternoon from her deck, Uncle Benny pointed out to Maggie a faint gray line which he said represented the New Jersey highlands.

There were only a few passengers on board; among them a Japanese lady with her daughter, a girl of about Maggie's age, who had been brought to America when a mere baby to grow up there and be educated.

Maggie thought she had never seen such a beautiful young girl. She could speak several languages besides her own, and could sing like a fairy.

Her mother, too, was a very gracious lady, though very stately, and was exceedingly handsome; and

Maggie learned, without any surprise, that she was a princess in her own country, and that there were some political reasons why she had been absent so long. But there had been a change of rulers—a new Mikado, Tycoon, or whatever the name of or rank of the chief might be, and she was now going home to her former residence by way of India.

The name of the lady, Maggie also learned, was the Princess Osacea, and that of her daughter, from whom Maggie derived all her information, Jesso.

Before they had been two days at sea, Maggie had formed a deep attachment for this young girl.

Happily she herself was exempt from the distressing malady of sea-sickness; and Jesso was affected but slightly, while her mother, the princess, was very ill.

Here Maggie's sea-coast experience enabled her to be of much service, for although the princess had attendants of her own, they, like herself, were sea-sick. Besides, had they been well and experienced their ways were not the simple, artless ways of Maggie, nor could their touch of gentleness equal that of the considerate young girl.

As a natural consequence the princess soon loved her, and as she grew better, and able to walk about, she questioned Maggie and learned the particulars of her short history.

On hearing the story, which in a measure involved that of Julian and Uncle Benny, and the romantic and interesting search for his uncle, upon which the lad had entered, she sent for the old sailor, and a long conversation ensued between them.

From this interview with the princess, Uncle Benny came forth looking somewhat graver, but still with an air of profound satisfaction.

The parrot, which had been given its liberty in accordance with former usage, was taken in to see the princess at her request, and she was much amused with its monosyllabic replies to certain questions—questions, however, of rather a stereotyped order; it must be admitted.

It was noticeable that in the presence of Uncle Benny Chockablock invariably grew hoarser, as if he felt that the voice of the old sailor possessed far greater dignity than any other, and it was desirable to imitate his teacher in manner as well as words.

After old Benny's interview with the princess, he was very often on deck with one of the young girls on each side of him—and he soon came to be considered as a sort of guardian for Jesso, as well as for Maggie.

And so until they were met by "a wave" of the same storm that the Hong Kong encountered, the good ship Punjab, for Bombay and India ports, sped on her course.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIGHT WITH THE SEA SERPENT.

On their return to the tent Julian and the captain made their breakfast, which was somewhat less limited as to quality—thanks to the canned meats and vegetables they had found with the ship's stores.

After breakfast they discussed the question of carrying the war into Africa, as the captain termed it, whether they should make an attack on the sea serpent, or wait to be attacked.

Julian had heard of these terrors of the ocean, but he had never expected to see one or aid in its destruction.

Meanwhile his opinion was that they could not begin too soon. With the weapons they now had he thought that the conquest of the monster would be comparatively easy.

This enthusiasm pleased the captain, and it was resolved to begin at once preparation for the conflict.

Whatever else they had to do could be done afterward, but there could be no feeling of safety in the present condition of affairs.

The first thing to be done was to go off to the wreck and strengthen their resistive capacity by every means in their power.

So declared Captain James, and as may be believed, Julian was not slow to coincide with him in that opinion.

They took with them the ax, saw and large auger, and going down to the water's edge, where lay the float the captain had used, they got aboard and paddled out to the wreck.

With the aid of the carpenter's tools they had brought, as soon as they were on board the hulk, they proceeded to replace that portion of the fore-castle bulkhead and planking that had been blown out or burned.

Fortunately the loose timbers and planks lying about afforded plenty of material for this purpose, and by placing timbers crosswise and endwise, and doubling planks, they succeeded in converting the fore-castle into a strong room with almost the resistive powers of a bomb-proof.

Here and there they left openings the size of one's wrist, or smaller, through which weapons could be thrust. And after the deck overhead had been strengthened by transverse timbers, Julian bored with the large auger a series of holes commanding an easy view of the beach, and of the wall of ledge in front, and of the sea below.

The hulk lying bow on, this was not difficult.

By the time all this work of preparation was completed the day was nearly at an end.

They had made two or three visits to the shore, and now made a final one to bring off such things as they wanted for the night, including water and provision.

A careful examination of sea and sky, and the direction of the wind had satisfied Captain James that no storm was likely to spring up.

They ate their supper, saw the moon rise slowly and gradually, with a light almost like that of day, and they retired within their strong fortification.

"With the advantages we now have, my boy," said the captain, "we shall give him a hard fight. He may be here early, or may not until the moon is low down; probably may not come at all. In any event, it will only be necessary for one to watch."

"Let me be the one, then," said Julian, eagerly.

"As you like," said the captain. "But I had a good sleep last night, right here; though by no means so well sheltered and protected as now, and am feeling fresh. My arm, too, has ceased to pain me and is evidently doing well. Still, if you like, you can begin the watch. If you see anything waken me, and, in any event, call me when you get sleepy, or say about midnight." He disposed his limbs comfortably, and lying down, was soon asleep.

Moving softly about from one improvised port-hole to another, Julian alternately watched and listened, but for a long time saw no signs of any living or creeping thing.

To his ears came the soft rippling of the waves, and far out to westward the dull roar of the surf.

Time passed away, and Julian was beginning to grow drowsy, and remembering what the captain had said, he felt it to be his duty to awaken him. Yet he hesitated, and rubbing his eyes took one more look at the beach.

The whole of its dark line nearest to him seemed to be moving. Or was it a wave of unusual size? He looked again, and his sleepiness vanished at the instant.

It was the sea serpent!

The terrible creature, eighty, ninety, or perhaps a hundred feet in length, was just drawing itself out of the water.

Three noiseless steps to the captain's side, and Julian's hand was upon his shoulder.

"It is here," he whispered, excitedly.

Captain James was alert and on his feet instantly. He took a survey of the beach.

"Hard at work already," he declared, "and proposes to dine at our expense."

"We have but one gun for long range, but fortunately we have plenty of ammunition. The revolvers will do for close work, if he swims off to us. Statistics of battles show scientifically that it takes on an average two hundred and sixty pounds of lead to kill one man. I hope we shall do better than that, though his skin is tougher than the hide of a rhinoceros. I will open fire on him at once, for I see that our rations are going fast. The eyes, throat and tail are the most vulnerable points. Take due notice, Julian, and govern yourself accordingly, if it comes to closer range. Stand by with the revolvers!"

While speaking the captain thrust the rifle through a port-hole and fired.

The sea serpent paid no attention to indicate that it was hit or had heard the discharge.

The captain had loaded the other barrel with slugs. He now fired it with better effect.

The huge reptile threw itself into a mighty coil—bearing some slight resemblance to the copper "worm" of a poisonous distillery—with wondrous celerity, and with its terrible jaws apart and head rising to a height of ten feet or more appeared to look around him for the aggressor.

The captain gave the gun to Julian to reload, while he took one of the revolvers.

"The temptation is great," he said to Julian, "to try him with a pistol, even at this range. Perhaps it will reach him; I'll try it."

He thrust out the revolver and fired the whole seven charges in rapid succession.

The shots told—probably, however, only striking the creature and glancing off.

He uttered a wild cry like that they so well remembered, and launched itself in the air, straight toward the wreck, striking the water with a sound as if a ship's mast had fallen flat upon it.

"He's coming," cried Julian, excitedly, as he rammed down a final charge and capped the gun. "Now for it!"

"Let him come, my boy," said the captain, coolly. "Give me the gun, and stand by with the other revolver."

As he spoke he fired both barrels at the advancing enemy.

There was another cry of rage and pain.

Replacing the gun by the revolver the captain discharged its loads in rapid succession—this time at much shorter range, and with excellent effect.

There was no time to reload either weapons, and the captain instinctively caught up a knife.

On the instant there came a crash against the bow, reaching clear over the strongly-braced deck to the other side, and, for a moment, wreck and timbers shook and cracked, and trembled like pine twigs in a forest tornado. Well was it for them that they had taken the terrible enemy at a disadvantage.

They hastily loaded the weapons, and watched their opportunity for a shot, which was soon offered them.

The dark shining mask of its body moved slowly across one of the openings left between the timbers, and Julian thrusting his pistol close, fired, while the captain at the same instant seizing the opportunity at another opening, drove his knife to the hilt in the monster, leaving it in the wound.

These effective results extorted another cry, followed by several successive crashes of deck and timbers as the maddened reptile lashed about with its tremendous tail.

But the precautions taken by Captain James had not been in vain.

Thus the deadly struggle continued till near morning, when the violent efforts of the creature slackened, and the huge body was heard to drop into the sea, and though they listened for some time intently, they could hear nothing further.

Meanwhile the moon having gone down, and the

darkness that precedes dawn having supervened, and feeling weary with the struggle and satisfied that it had ended in victory—whether the serpent was dead or had made off to sea—the captain and Julian lay down and slept soundly until near midday.

When they awoke the air was filled with the cries of birds, which Julian thought sounded like a chorus of thanksgiving.

There was a long irregular line of whitish gray in the water drifting out to sea, over which the birds were hovering in great excitement.

The captain pronounced it to be the upturned corpse of the monster.

They removed the barricades, and came out on the broken deck.

It had taken, Julian estimated, more than one hundred and fifty rounds of ammunition, and many thrusts of the long knives to win the conflict.

But it was over, and henceforth they could now rest in peace, and with renewed hopes they returned to the island and their tent on the summit.

CHAPTER XV.

THE TIDAL WAVE—ANOTHER SURPRISE.

The balance of the day was occupied in gathering together combustibles for the beacon fire, of which the captain had previously spoken.

It was placed on the highest point of ground, not far from the tent, and composed of the most inflammable material to be found on the island.

That night they slept, especially the captain, in the confidence of a security which had before been unfeigned.

They were quite busy the next forenoon, but after dinner they set out for the rock at the east end of the island, taking with them a spade and a few yards of sail-cloth, for the purpose of burying the skeleton, which purpose, as will be remembered, had been postponed by their fight with the sea serpent.

They found everything as they had left it on the occasion of their former visit to the place.

The bright sun, which had that day gilded the tree-tops, and the glassy surface of the little harbor, and the whole top of the rock with a cheerful aspect of welcome, to-day shone dull and mistily, and the atmosphere, far from being clear as on the former visit, had in it a drowsy haze which the captain remarked as presaging something unusual.

A nebulous gathering in the southern horizon, too, seemed to indicate, he thought, a sudden change.

As there had been no thick weather since their arrival on the island, he told Julian they must prepare for it by housing themselves more strongly on their return.

With these incidental observations, they then gave their attention to the especial purpose that had brought them to the rock.

Tenderly, and with reverent hands, they gathered up the relics of frail mortality, wrapping them in the piece of sail.

Descending the rock, they carried them to a point midway between the grove and tent, where the sunshine rested all day.

They opened a grave in the yielding sand.

With uncovered heads they knelt, and the captain uttered a brief prayer—part of the burial service at sea—and the solemn task was soon completed.

They returned to the rock.

The slab in the niche, whereon the skeleton had rested, was distinctly outlined, but fitting so closely that it was found impossible without other tools to raise it.

Julian remembered the chisels that were in the sailor's chest on the beach, and asked Captain James if he thought they would answer.

"Just the thing, if we only had them," was his response.

"I'll go for them at once," declared Julian, starting off at a rapid pace, and a moment after the captain, looking down, saw him running through the grove, whistling cheerfully, as was his wont.

The captain paced about a little outside, and then coming within the walls, sat down on a stone seat commanding a view from the small, round windows of the little harbor, and waited for the boy's return.

How long he sat there he could not afterward recall, though not for long; but he was suddenly startled by hearing a terrible roar, unlike anything he had ever heard.

If had in it something of the sound of a falling cataract—of distant thunder rolling momentarily nearer, and of the hissing sharpness of an advancing tempest.

At the same moment myriads of birds, screaming discordantly, flew affrighted past.

Captain James, with a premonition of danger strong upon him, sprang to his feet and rushed out. As he did so, he saw the trees of the grove before and around him bowing low, to what seemed an immense wall of seething, driving foam, which parted by the rock upon which he stood, and throwing its spray over him, went rushing past like a mid-winter avalanche.

What had happened?

He instinctively sprang toward the low stone door and grasped it clingly, as he asked himself the question.

Had the island suddenly sunk, or had the ocean suddenly risen to overwhelm him?

Before his startled mind could solve the thought, the gigantic wave had passed, the trees of the grove reappeared, and he saw the mighty volume of water go rolling on.

"A tidal wave!" he exclaimed, as the truth burst

upon him. "What a narrow escape! But great Heaven! Julian! Where is Julian?"

In an instant he had clambered to the highest point of the rock, and was gazing toward the tent, with anguish in his face.

Julian was not there!

But as he withdrew his glance, he caught sight of him.

Safe! hardly three rods distant he saw him caught by a broken branch, and clinging in the top of one of the tallest trees.

He called to him, and Julian answered cheerily enough, but with evident amazement at his almost miraculous preservation, in his tones.

The boy shook himself loose from the friendly limb that had caught him, and climbing down, came dripping and thankful to the top of the skeleton rock.

The two castaways shook hands and embraced each other.

Julian was on the beach, he told the captain, when he first heard the roar of its coming.

He had secured the chisels and put them in his pocket, and when he saw the long, dark line with its white crest advancing, he started to run, but it overtook him before he had taken a dozen steps. He had felt himself caught up and borne irresistibly onward, and gave himself up for lost, when he was suddenly arrested by his clothes catching the broken branch, to which he had instantly fastened with all his might and clung for life until the passing water yielded him up.

They knelt on the spot and gave thanks to the Giver of all good, for their preservation.

Laying aside his outer clothing, which was, of course, thoroughly drenched, Julian produced the chisels, and after some little difficulty they succeeded in raising the slab, which proved to be about four inches thick, and turned it backward on its edge.

A cavity, perhaps a foot in depth and width by three in length, was disclosed.

There was a seaman's cutlass, in a good state of preservation, and some few iron and brass articles for culinary use, but the main object revealed within was a stout box of iron, bound at the corners and edges with brass.

It occupied more than half the space within.

The captain took hold of it to lift it out, and uttered an exclamation of surprise at its great weight.

"I was correct, Julian," he said, significantly, "in thinking that sure results would certainly follow your search for your uncle. We are evidently on the eve of a new discovery."

"You think this, then, some of the old pirate's long-hidden treasure, sir?" questioned Julian, taking hold of one end of the box.

"Bearing in mind the name and date on the face of the cliff, below," replied the captain, "it looks like it, my boy."

He took hold of the other end of the box as he spoke, and it required their united efforts to raise it from its long repose.

Resting it upon the edge of the niche, the light, which had grown faint, felt somewhat more strongly upon it, and disclosed an inscription engraved on the lid.

"See if you can make it out, Julian," said the captain; "a tremendous fog is rising seaward, and our stay here must be brief," he added, glancing out at the window.

Julian bent over the box.

There was an engraved death's head and cross-bones, and underneath, in writing, a terrible denunciation of any one who should open the box—*save he whose name was engraved on the side.*

Julian moved to permit the fast waning light to fall upon the name.

It was in large, antique letters, much corroded, like the rest, by time and the elements, but it flashed upon him like lightning from a dark sky.

That name!—wonder of wonders!—was BENNY HAVEN!

CHAPTER XVI.

A BOAT AND A RESCUE.

A storm so tremendous as that which had overtaken the Hong Kong, was not likely to have left the Punjab scathless.

But the course of the latter vessel was not in the direct path of the hurricane, when she first felt its force.

When it did strike her, however, she was compelled to close-reef every sail, batten down the hatches, and scud before it under bare poles.

She was driven widely from her course, but those on board were too thankful to have outridden a tempest in which they knew many a gallant ship had gone down, to feel any special regret at a divergence that was not without remedy.

The morning after the storm, as we know, rose brightly upon the ocean, and the commander having taken his bearings, not without surprise at finding himself blown so far from the regular track, was about resuming his course, when the voice of the look-out at the mast-head was heard hailing the officer of the deck.

"What is it?" questioned that official through his trumpet.

"A boat, sir, I think, but I can't just make it out."

"Where away?" demanded the officer, springing into the rigging.

"Two points on the weather bow, sir."

By this time the commander was on deck, and ordering the man at the wheel to bear up two points, he took the glass, and sprang up beside the officer, while a number of those in bearing, including Uncle Benny, clustered closer.

"Mast head there!"

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Can you make her out yet?"

"A boat, sir, sure! and a movement on board. Two men I think, sir."

Springing lightly to the deck again, the commander ordered the yards squared, and the man at the wheel to run down to it.

A few minutes showed that the look-out was correct, that it was, indeed, a boat with somebody on board.

In a few moments more they were within hailing distance.

Two men were plainly seen standing up and waving a signal.

The sensation on board the Punjab had increased to quite an excitement, and passengers as well as crew were all clustering to the bulwarks on that side, and Uncle Benny had been joined by the two young girls, Maggie and Jesso.

"How came they here, Uncle Benny, have they been wrecked?" inquired Maggie.

"Must have come in the boat, my dear," was the old sailor's practical reply. "But wrecked of course, and perhaps the only survivors."

"Oh, I hope not!" cried the two girls in chorus.

They looked over the side.

By this time the boat was coming under the quarter, and willing hands were dropping ropes into her, which were eagerly grasped.

Uncle Benny gave one glance into the boat below, and reeled backward, pale and shaking with emotion.

"That name, Maggie," he gasped hoarsely—"that name on her gunwale, can you make it out? my eyes are dim."

Maggie uttered a cry.

She could, alas! too surely, "The Hong Kong!"

The name on the boat showed the ship to which it had belonged.

The old sailor trembled for a moment like a main-sheet shivering in the wind, with the two young girls clinging to him on each side in excitement and alarm.

But his was not the soul to blanch when duty called.

He rallied again on the instant, and bidding "his two wards," as he had lately called them, to remain quiet where they were, he went forward to where the two men were being drawn on board.

It was the steward and purser—who it will be remembered disappeared from the gaze of Julian when the mast of the Hong Kong went by the board.

The same crash, it appeared, had carried away the yawl boat, and they had found themselves in the water near it, and had seized upon it as drowning men grasp at straws—with a gripe that nothing but death can loosen.

They had clung to it until daylight, when they had succeeded in righting and bailing her out.

They were very much worn and exhausted, and were immediately taken into the commander's cabin. Uncle Benny, at his request, accompanied them.

While being suitably refreshed, they told their story.

In response to the eager questioning of Uncle Benny, they told how they had last seen Julian standing with Captain James, on the bow, only a moment before the Hong Kong struck.

The only glance they had of the land induced them to think it a huge, rocky reef, outlying a jutting coast or small island, for they had been swept around and past the point by a strong current, clinging to their overturned boat, and barely escaping being dashed to pieces among the breakers. And in hardly as many seconds as it took minutes to tell it, reef, island and breakers vanished away leeward.

Then arose the question between Uncle Benny and the commander, at this unsatisfactory conclusion, how far the men must have drifted before they succeeded in righting the yawl, and how far they had come since.

The rescued men could not say. They had no means of knowing.

The commander got out his charts and made an extended examination, but could find no mention of any reef or island in the vicinity he supposed himself to be.

What should be done in view of all the facts?

It hardly required the earnest solicitations of Uncle Benny, backed by the urgent entreaty of the Princess Osacca to induce Lieut. Berry, the commander, to attempt to find this unknown land. And it was at once determined to cruise two or three days at least, in that locality, in the hopes of finding it; or, perhaps, of falling in with one of the other boats that had been launched.

Many of the passengers, as well as the lieutenant-commander, had already heard from either Uncle Benny, or Maggie, Julian's history, and the romantic undertaking of his search for his uncle, Captain Kidd.

The singular name of his uncle had, perhaps, given to the boy's enterprise a greater interest than it otherwise would have had—added to which one-half of the crew, at least, among whom the story had partially got wind, were of the firm opinion that the search was simply a treasure-seeking expedition, for the gold and hidden store of the old pirate himself, and were not slow to declare their desire to join in a search for the searcher.

The story of Julian's encounter with the land-shark, and of his rescue by Captain James at the critical moment, when the merciless fingers of his betrayer were tearing his mother's Bible and its treasure from his unconscious clasp—had created an impression among the passengers very favorable to that gentleman; and it was with more than the ordinary regret due a stranger, that they heard of the disaster to him and his vessel.

The princess, it appeared, was especially saddened by the intelligence, she having met Captain James on what she called a memorable occasion, while

making her preparations for sailing; and the intention of Commander Berry to cruise for a sight of the wreck, or the shore where it had struck, was received by all on board with much satisfaction.

Accordingly, additional look-outs were placed at the fore and masthead, and indeed, every one aboard ship, not otherwise engaged, might have been said to be on the look-out.

The calmness of the ocean, and the exceeding clearness of the atmosphere, lent for a time fair hope to their efforts.

Even the princess, herself, with Uncle Benny and the two young girls grouped by her, and the ship's glass in the hands of the old sailor, kept, perhaps, the keenest look-out of all.

On the first day, however, they saw nothing but the vast troops of sea-gulls that followed in their track.

The second day they were more successful. They encountered the long-boat of the Hong Kong, her bow stove, and drifting helplessly, the sport of the wind and waves—not a sail in or about her.

Alas! for the crew that had launched her.

Not till the sea gives up its dead shall they evermore answer to the numbers of their mess.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FIRING OF THE BEACON.

It was the greatest surprise of all to Julian.

The discovery of the name of old Benny Haven upon a chest supposed to contain pirates' gold—on a desert island in mid-ocean.

While they yet pondered over it, wondering and commenting on its significance, they became suddenly aware of the fact, that the dense fog of which the captain had spoken, had become almost palpable.

Sky and sea and rock seemed to be obliterated in the density of the mist that had come rolling in.

They found it impossible to see ten feet away, and even while they looked at each other, they saw their figures assuming a vagueness of outline grotesque and almost alarming.

"What shall we do?" asked Julian; "shall we attempt to take the box with us to the tent, or shall we leave it here? Can we risk opening it?"

"The last is a matter for future consideration," said the captain; "but we had better leave it where it is for the present, especially if we carry out our purpose of making the rock our future place of residence."

"It is safe here, at all events—too safe, I am afraid. My appetite warns me, as well as this impenetrable fog, and the necessity of your making some change of clothing, that we had better be getting back to the tent. Let us start at once, my lad."

Suited the action to the word, Captain James led the way down through the grove and up the slope, thinking as he went how little availed the discovery just made.

For, had not the man, whose treasure it appeared to be, been doomed to years of isolation there—years of mingled hope and despair, ending at last in death?

In the light of this thought, the finding of the box, and its subsequent guardianship, had no interest for Captain James.

To Julian, however, it was a matter of profound interest.

His thoughts went at a bound across the ocean to Uncle Benny's cabin on the terrace, and he pictured to himself the old man's surprise and excitement when this unknown treasure from an unknown donor, perhaps, should be brought to him from over sea—discovered in the manner it had been by them.

They reached the tent in safety, thanks to the pilotage of Captain James, and after Julian had made shift to don some dry clothes, they proceeded to satisfy their appetites.

"I hope the tidal wave has not washed away what stores the sea serpent left us," said the captain, incidentally.

"I hope not, sir," responded Julian, with rather a grave face, for this was the first time he had thought of the possibility.

"Would it move the heavy cask, do you think, sir?" he added.

"Easily enough," said Captain James. "I remember a tidal wave on the gulf coast once that took a government war steamer with its complete armament of men and guns, from its anchorage in the harbor a mile and a half inland, leaving her high and dry upon the broad prairie when the wave receded. But of course that wave was far more powerful than this, or at least this may have spent much of its force, as it had probably traveled thousands of miles before reaching here."

"It was terribly swift, at all events," said Julian, with the remembrance still strong upon him. "No race horse could have caught me as quick."

"Certainly not," was the response, "for the good reason that in the deep and open ocean the velocity of the tidal wave is said to be a thousand miles an hour, though near the land it is much less."

Julian expressed his astonishment.

"I sincerely hope, I repeat, that it has not taken all our rations on the beach," continued the captain, "for I believe we have not many in the tent."

"No, sir," replied Julian, with a sober face; "not more than enough for two days, I think, sir," getting up and looking about him. "But if the worse comes to worst," he added, brightening, "there are the birds, sir."

"Yes," assented the captain, inquisitively. "But how will you get them? Our ammunition was nearly exhausted in the fight. Whatever is left on the wreck is no doubt ruined—if indeed any portion of the old bulk should still be left."

"But, sir," said Julian, the shadows these words cast over his young face vanishing away, "it would

not be necessary to use even what we have on them—anybody who has lived in the country knows how to trap birds, and—"

"Hark!" exclaimed the captain, suddenly interrupting, and starting to his feet, with one hand upraised warningly, in an attitude of listening.

"It is nothing," he added, after a moment, with a long breath, almost a sigh. "I thought I heard a sound like the running out of a cable, as if some ship was coming to an anchor. Of course it could not be. Go on."

"I was about to add, sir, that in addition to the birds as food, there ought to be plenty of black-fish and sea-bass off the point there, if not clams and oysters, and no boy would starve on those."

"Well, well, my lad," was the response, "we shall make the most of what we have, no doubt, be our stay here long or short."

He rose and paced up and down thoughtfully, while Julian stepped outside to take an observation.

"Don't go far!" called the captain, after him.

"No, sir," responded Julian. "I should have to almost feel my way, sir, if I did, for though the fog appears to be clearing a little, the coming night makes it fearfully dark."

Julian walked a few paces from the tent, straining his eyes to penetrate the fog and darkness, but the leaden-like opaqueness no glance, however keen, could penetrate six feet away.

And as he came to this conclusion, Julian indulged in that habit for which boys from time immemorial, have been noted. He began to whistle. Not to "keep up his courage," for this was no special occasion to call it in question, but from mere lack of thought, perhaps, and the well-known air of

"The girl I left behind me,"

rung out melodiously on the thick night air, for the first time perhaps in the history of that unknown land.

For two minutes, the light-hearted lad, whom no past perils could sadden, nor future foreboding disturb, whistled as merrily as he had done at home in the days now so old, when he was suddenly startled by a rush of wings in the air above his head, and a large bird perched on his shoulder.

"Hallo, Jule!" cried a hoarse voice, with a chuckle of satisfaction easily recognized.

Julian gave a shout of surprise, which brought Captain James speedily to the door of the tent.

"What is it?" he asked, as the boy came running toward him.

"See, sir; see!" he exclaimed, excitedly, "Uncle Benny's parrot."

"Are you sure, Julian?" cried the captain, as the boy entered the tent with the bird on his shoulder.

"Positive, sir," and addressing the parrot: "You know me, old fellow? You know Jule?"

"Ay! ah!" screamed the bird, at its very hoarsest. "This tops everything," declared Julian. "How in the world could he have got here, sir?"

There was more excitement visible in the features of Captain James than Julian had ever seen there.

"My lad," he said, "this means something! That sound that I thought I heard, so like the running out of a cable! It must have been on shipboard. Our release may be at hand! Let us light the beacon at once!"

He seized the tallow candle—a box of which had been found among the stores—and guarding its flame from the wind and damp with his hand, stepped out of the tent.

The pile of combustibles which they had gathered ready for lighting were only a few feet away, and, in a moment, the captain was kneeling at its base.

"How fortunate," he said, "that the tidal wave reached no higher, or we might have lost our material."

He touched the combustibles with the lighted candle.

The flame, shot up instantly, gathering volume as it rose, and in a minute it was towering twenty feet into the air.

It dispelled the mist and vapor about, with the celerity of thought, and threw a light far down the slope and over the water.

The outlines of a large ship, evidently at anchor a short distance out, were dimly revealed.

"Thank Heaven!" cried the captain, fervently, as he saw it.

Forgetting everything but the relief it promised, they both swung their hats, and cheered with all the power of their lungs.

A commotion was instantly visible on board the vessel, and no doubt several night-glasses were brought to bear upon their figures, defined in bold relief against the bright background of fire. A moment more, and a voice giving orders through a trumpet could be distinctly heard.

A boat was lowered, and came swiftly pulled to land.

Julian, followed at a slower step by Captain James, ran down to the water's edge to meet it.

It touched the shore, and three or four men sprung out—among them a stout figure—the boy had last seen fading away on the cabin terrace the day he had left home.

"Uncle Benny!"

"Julian!"

And they rushed into each other's arms.

For a moment there was utter silence—save the lapping of the waves against the side of the boat and on the shore.

"God bless you, my lad," cried the old man in deep emotion.

"Amen—and God bless us all! Uncle Benny," said another voice behind, reverently.

The old sailor turned on the instant.

Something in the tones he had evidently recognized.

Captain James was standing near, fully revealed in the light of the boat's lantern held aloft by one of the men.

He was holding out his hand and smiling a glad recognition to Uncle Benny, while Julian looked, from one to the other, thunderstruck.

"Captain Kidd!" exclaimed the old sailor, as he grasped the extended hand in a tone which made the boat's crew start—"Captain Kidd!"

"Yes, Uncle Benny—yes, Julian!" was the response; "Captain James Kidd!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

AND LAST.

THE story of *The Sea Serpent* is herein drawing to a close.

Julian and Captain James returned with Uncle Benny and the boat's crew to the ship, and in a few words before reaching it, the captain explained that he had many years ago legally disclaimed the ominous name of Kidd, making his Christian name of James do double duty.

He further explained that he had not made himself known to Julian, heretofore, much as he had desired to do so, because of his desire to study the boy's character without his being influenced by the knowledge of kinship. But he was now, he told Uncle Benny, fully satisfied of the lad's thorough unselfishness and noble heart.

In which verdict the old sailor promptly coincided.

They were received on board the Punjab with quite an ovation, in which, as may be presumed, the princess and her daughter, and Maggie were not the least active, nor the last to extend their warmest congratulations.

They remained on board that night without returning to the island—the time being more than occupied by the explanations on both sides.

The discovery of the strong box bearing the name of Benny Haven, with all the incidental particulars, the location of the rock, the finding of the skeleton, and other details, were duly made known to Uncle Benny by Julian; the old man listening with rapt attention till the conclusion was reached.

"Poor Ned!" he then remarked, quietly, while a few tears rolled down his sunburnt face. "Poor Ned, I'd have never thought he'd 'a' come to such an end as that! For, of course," he declared, turning to those about him, "you understand, my hearties, all that it was my old messmate, Ned Trustrim."

"Why, Uncle Benny, I would never have thought of him," declared Julian, wonderingly. "And yet I had your letter to him, too, and ought to have thought. Yet how came you to know it was your old messmate without seeing what's in the box?"

"By the token, my dear boy, that I never know'd anybody else who had a box that would leave it to me! You will see in the morning I am right."

While this conversation was taking place on deck between Uncle Benny and Julian, surrounded by Maggie, Jess, and a group of eager listeners, including *Chock-a-block*, the parrot, who was perched up behind Uncle Benny, as if conscious of being the first discoverer, Captain James was giving his version of their story to the princess, Commander Berry, and some others, in the cabin.

He had learned of the commander's picking up the two men—indeed, they had been among the first to welcome him as he came aboard the Punjab. And he now learned also of the extended search that had been made for the island, and of the fact that the Punjab owed her present position mainly to the accident of having been struck by the tidal wave, that had swept over the island.

The vessel had been driven almost wholly at its mercy for a time, and dropped in shoal water off the island, where they had anchored, the rising fog and unknown soundings giving a decided preference for daylight.

The next morning happily was clear, and, after breakfast, led by the commander, everybody who could be spared was permitted to go ashore.

A special party, consisting of Commander Berry, Uncle Benny, the princess, Captain James, Julian, the two girls, and a couple of men, detailed for the purpose, went direct to the rock, which was duly inspected and wondered at by all.

The box, under Uncle Benny's sanction, was then opened with due solemnity.

It contained a large quantity of gold and silver, some in coins of various nationalities, some in bars and ingots; enough, altogether, to make Uncle Benny comfortable for life, and to leave his heiress, as he told Maggie, a nice little plum to share with Julian.

At which suggestion the young girl blushed very brightly, indeed.

The box also contained a letter, and some other papers, wrapped in oil-skin, from Ned Trustrim, explaining briefly his presence on the island, and, of course, proving Uncle Benny's surmise of the night before correct.

Poor Ned, it appeared, had been to the coast of Africa, in furtherance of his intention of becoming a king.

He had led a wild kind of life, darkly hinted at in connection with the slave-trade. Had amassed this prize-money found in the box, and had set out on his return to America, to enjoy it.

The ship had foundered at sea, and he and two of his companions only, had reached this island in a boat—a boat that had been stove, in the breakers.

Each of his companions, one of whom had been in earlier life a stone-mason, had successively died during the four years succeeding; and he himself at the time of the writing, for six months the sole survivor, knew he was dying.

This, with some other particulars, for his old messmate's eyes alone.

He had discovered, while here, as any one else

would do, who took the trouble to land, that the island had once been a haunt of pirates—of Captain Kidd—and he had found preserved in a bottle, a chart, wherein was laid down clear information of particular localities where Kidd had concealed his treasure, which chart Ned Truisthim left his old messmate, Benny Haven, as he did all and singular, whatever he possessed.

One of these hiding-places duly marked on the chart, was at the bottom of the great cistern.

He and his companions had sounded it, and found what they believed to be a big square chest at the bottom, which they had never been able to get out, being unable to drain off the water, although they had hewn steps, for greater ease in getting at it, before their interest in it had died out, along with the final hope of escape from the island.

"Poor Ned!" said Uncle Benny, commiseratingly, after Julian had finished reading the letter. "So his long-wished-for kingdom was at last comprised only in this one little island."

"It was, indeed, hard for him, after he had set his heart on being a king," said Julian, aside to Maggie. "I would much rather be a prince somewhere else."

"Perhaps you may be yet—who knows?" was the response of the young girl, in the same tone.

The box was duly shut again and fastened, and in charge of the two men detailed by the commander was conveyed aboard ship and deposited in Uncle Benny's state-room.

The special party then adjourned from the rock to the beach, where the Hong Kong had first struck. It was then found that Captain James's fears had not been without foundation.

All the stores had been washed away by the great tidal wave, and the ship's hulk had entirely disappeared.

"Our arrival was none too soon," said the princess to Captain James, when these facts were ascertained.

"An arrival for which I shall never cease to be grateful to you," was his response.

"You do me too much honor," was her negative reply, her black eyes flashing under her long lashes, and with a rising flush on her cheeks.

They moved leisurely up the slope, followed by Julian and the girls, whither the commander and Uncle Benny and most of the crew and passengers had already preceded them, on their way to the great cistern.

The statement that a large chest of Captain Kidd's long-hidden treasure was at the bottom of it, and the declaration of Captain James, confirmed by Uncle Benny, as legatees of the discoverer, that whatever was found should be equally divided, had produced an unwonted excitement.

Accordingly, that afternoon, as soon as the necessary appliances could be procured, Julian and the captain, with a detail of men from the Punjab, went to work to drain the cistern.

This they soon found was no easy task.

It required the whole day and a part of the next before a channel could be cut through the solid rock deep enough, and with fall enough to empty it to the bottom.

This labor was watched and cheered forward by all the passengers and those of the crew unoccupied, and with a special interest by the Princess Osacca, and the young girls Jesso and Maggie.

At last, however, the task was accomplished, the water got lower and lower, and the treasure was revealed.

A huge, square chest of iron reposing at the bottom, so corroded with rust that the outlines of its original construction could hardly be traced.

A large hawser was brought and passed round it.

At first it seemed almost as immovable as the rock itself, but at length it yielded, moving slowly from the bed of its long repose, and was dragged remorselessly out.

By this time the curiosity of all was greatly excited, as may be supposed, and the chest was instantly surrounded.

That this was a portion of the long-hidden treasure of the ancient freebooters, was sufficient to raise expectation to fever heat, and speculation was rife among the crew, and bets offered as to the amount of money it contained, and whether it was in Spanish doubloons, Mexican dollars, or ingots and bars, such as were in Uncle Benny's box.

That the treasure was immense was evident, so it was argued, from its weight.

The chest was so incrustated, that neither lock nor hinges were visible or traceable, and for all outward evidence to the contrary, it might have been a solid mass of iron.

A sledge and crew were hastily brought to burst it open.

A few vigorous blows did the work; the chest fell asunder—and what a treasure was revealed!

It was packed full of stones, the same sandstone formation that composed the ledge.

The only thing in addition thereto was a small, round roll wrapped in some kind of cloth, which fell away in decay on its being lifted out.

It was a small proof-glass, such as is used in testing spirits.

On being held to the light, it was seen to contain a thin roll of writing paper.

The cork was removed, the paper taken out and unrolled by Captain James in the midst of a small sea of upturned faces, variously filled with wonderment, curiosity and disappointment.

It contained the following words in plain writing, in a remarkably good state of preservation:

"TO YOU who shall hear these words—KNOW THIS, That no treasure is equal to a contented mind, and no happiness so great as that of the cheerful spirit. KNOW THIS, also, That there is no pleasure

without toil, and no life without a burden; and without honest, steadfast labor there can be neither rest nor reward. If, then, You are disappointed in seeking for fruits in trees you have not planted, take encouragement in these my parting words—Ye are not the first fools who have sought for Kidd's treasure, nor will ye be the last!"

There was neither signature nor date.

"Rather a severe joke on us!" commented Capt. James to those about him—smiling at the rueful and disappointed faces around him.

"Pirite Capen good preachee! all same—hab less buz—buz—and more baked pig!" muttered one of the steward's men—a Chinaman, which was followed by a laugh and brighter faces.

"Never mind, my lads," said Captain James cheerily, to the crew, "you shall not go unrequited for your labor. Fortunately I still have, despite the loss of my ship, of which I was chief owner, something to my credit in the Bank of England. And I hereby authorize your commander," turning to that gentleman, who stood behind him, "to distribute among you one thousand dollars in gold on our arrival in port—as a pleasant memorial of this adventure here."

"And your commander is authorized to make a similar distribution from me!" said the princess.

These announcements were received with a great deal of cheering, and the group around the iron chest speedily dissolved; each man declaring confidentially to his immediate neighbor, his belief that old Captain Kidd never left any treasure anywhere.

One who had been the most zealous in emptying the cistern, affirmed his entire conviction that there never was such a man as Kidd—the pirate.

To which his more philosophic hearer—who happened to be Uncle Benny, demurred; but asserted that the words contained in the paper found would still hold true, were it otherwise:

"No treasure is equal to a contented mind, and no happiness so great as that of the cheerful spirit!"

That afternoon—and a bright and lovely one it was, they weighed anchor, and the Punjab resumed her course for Bombay and the East.

They took with them many mementoes of the island.

Captain James, after earnest consultation with Julian and Uncle Benny, had decided to return direct to India, taking them with him.

Accordingly, two days thereafter, when the Punjab spoke a steamer bound for New York, in addition to the usual passengers' letters sent by her, Captain James forwarded to his agents a detailed account which he had prepared concerning the loss of the Hong Kong, and his destination homeward. He also sent to his agents' lawyer an authorization from him, as Julian's natural and chosen guardian, with instructions to take immediate legal proceedings against Squire Lawson for his usurpation in the name of the law.

The passage out to Bombay was marked by no further incident necessary to record herein—save, perhaps, that Captain James's attention to the princess became of a very decided character, and it was more than rumored that a wedding would be the happy result at the close of the voyage.

Which consummation, his nephew, Julian, being more interested perhaps than any one else, highly approved, as he told Maggie, and Uncle Benny; for they could now all live happily together, as became fast friends who loved each other, in the new country to which they were going.

Uncle Benny spent most of his time, in his state-room, studying Capt. Kidd's chart—as he termed the paper left him by poor Ned Truisthim, spending many hours (with his parrot looking gravely on) and with Julian and the girls poring over it, and thus as he expressed it, on the day of arrival—"he had not altogether lost his time by going to sea as 'a gen'l'man passenger'."

On landing at Bombay a telegram by cable from his agents' lawyer in New York, informed Captain James, that his instructions had been complied with promptly and that Squire Lawson had fled, having been charged with malfeasance in office and embezzlement.

This last information was all that was wanting to induce the princess to take Maggie to her home and heart, and she declared it to be her intention, to formally adopt her as Jesso's sister.

I would gladly linger, in the interest of my half million readers, over the gayety and festivities, with which the occasion of the marriage of the princess to Captain James was celebrated, and honored; for, I am assured that no more joyous event has transpired anywhere.

And of one fact we may be positive—that from that moment dated anew the beginning of happier days than any of our characters had ever known.

With which pleasant assurance, I bid my readers, one and all—till we meet again—a most cordial adieu.

THE END.

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No. 1.

Deadwood Dick, THE PRINCE OF THE ROAD; OR, THE BLACK RIDER of the BLACK HILLS.

BY EDWARD L. WHEELER.

CHAPTER I.
FEARLESS FRANK TO THE RESCUE.

On the plains, midway between Cheyenne and the Black Hills, a train had halted for a noonday feed. Not a railway train, mind you, but a line of those white-covered vehicles drawn by strong-limbed mules, which are most properly styled "prairie schooners."

There were four wagons of this type, and they had been drawn in a circle about a camp-fire, over which was roasting a savory haunch of venison. Around the camp-fire were grouped half a score of men, all rough, bearded, and grizzled, with one exception. This being a youth whose age one could have safely put at twenty, so perfectly developed of physique and intelligent of facial appearance was he. There was something about him that was not handsome, and yet you would have been puzzled to tell what it was, for his countenance was strikingly handsome, and surely no form in the crowd was more noticeable for its grace, symmetry, and proportionate development. It would have taken a scholar to have studied out the secret.

He was of about medium stature, and as straight and square-shouldered as an athlete. His complexion was nut-brown, from long exposure to the sun; hair of hue of the raven's wing, and hanging in long, straight strands adown his back; eyes black and piercing as an eagle's; features well molded, with a firm, resolute mouth and prominent chin. He was an interesting specimen of young, healthy manhood, and, even though a youth in years, was one that could command respect, if not admiration, wheresoever he might choose to go.

One remarkable item about his personal appearance, apt to strike the beholder as being exceedingly strange and eccentric, was his costume—buckskin throughout, and that dyed to the brightest scarlet hue.

On being asked the cause of this odd freak of dress, when he had joined the train a few miles out from Cheyenne, the youth had laughingly replied: "Why, you see, it is to attract buflers, if we should meet any, out on the plains 'twixt this and the Hills."

He gave his name as Fearless Frank, and said he was aiming for the Hills; that if the party in question would furnish him a place among them, he would extend to them his assistance as a hunter, guide, or whatever, until the destination was reached.

Seeing that he was well

armed, and judging from external appearances that he would prove a valuable accessory, the miners were nothing loth in accepting his services.

Of the others grouped about the camp-fire only one is specially noticeable, for, as Mark Twain remarks, "the average of gold-diggers look alike." This person was a little, deformed old man; hump-backed, bow-legged, and white-haired, with cross eyes, a large mouth, a big head, set upon a slim, crane-like neck; blue eyes, and an immense brown beard, that flowed downward half-way to the belt about his waist, which contained a small arsenal of knives and revolvers. He hobbled about with a heavy crutch constantly under his left arm, and was certainly a pitiable sight to behold.

He too had joined the caravan after it had quitted Cheyenne, his advent taking place about an hour subsequent to that of Fearless Frank. His name he asserted was Nix—Geoffrey Walsingham Nix—and where he came from, and what he sought in the Black Hills, was simply a matter of conjecture among the miners, as he refused to talk on the subject of his past, present or future.

The train was under the command of an irascible old plainsman who had served out his apprenticeship in the Kansas border war, and whose name was Charity Joe, which, considering his avaricious disposition, was the wrong handle on the wrong man. Charity was the least of all old Joe's redeeming characteristics; charity was the very thing he did not recognize, yet some wag had facetiously branded him Charity Joe, and the appellation had clung to him ever since. He was well advanced in years, yet withal a good trailer and an expert guide, as the success of his many late expeditions into the Black Hills had evidenced.

Those who had heard of Joe's skill as a guide, intrusted themselves in his care, for, while the stages were stopped more or less on each trip, Charity Joe's train invariably went through all safe and sound. This was partly owing to his acquaintance with various bands of Indians, who were the chief cause of annoyance on the trip.

So far we see the train toward the land of gold, without their having seen sight or sound of hostile red-skins, and Charity is just chuckling over his usual good luck:

"I tell ye what, fellers, we've hed a fa'r sort uv a shake, so fur, an' no mistake 'bout it. Barrin' thar ain't no Sittin' Bulls layin' in wait fer us, be-head yander, in ther mounts, I'm of ther candid opinion we'll get through wi'out scrap-in' a ha'r."

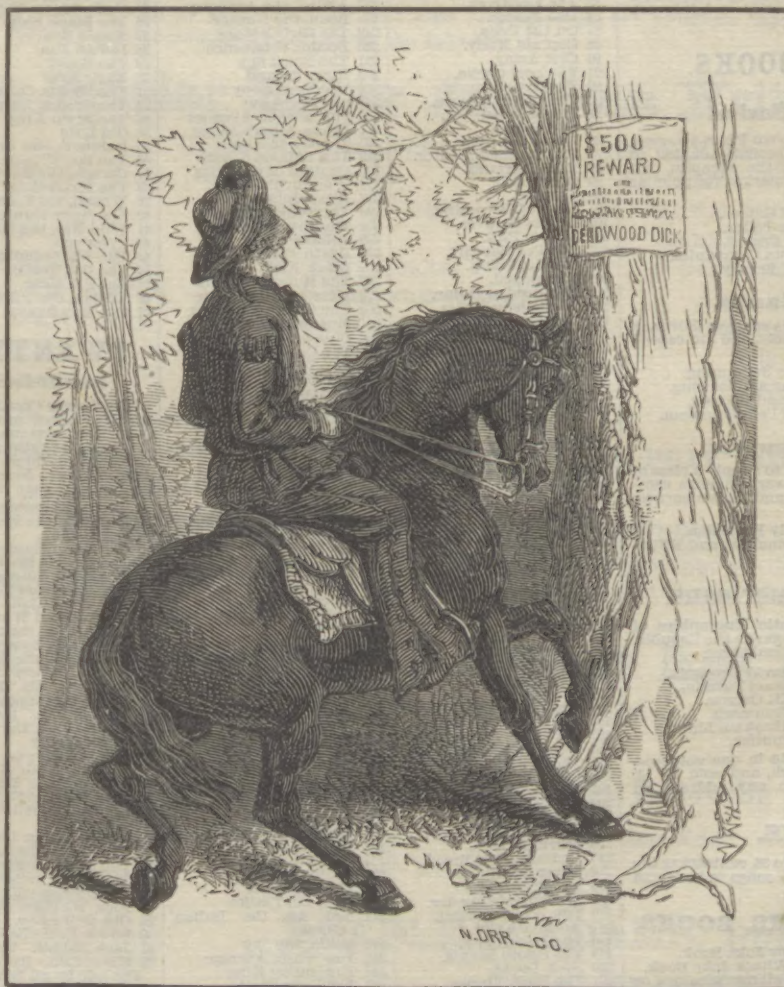
"I hope so," said Fearless Frank, rolling over on the grass and gazing at the guide, thoughtfully, "but I doubt it. It seems to me that one hears of more butchering, lately, than there was a month ago—all on account of the influx of ruffianly characters into the Black Hills!"

"Not all owing to that, chippy," interposed "General" Nix, as he had immediately been christened by the miners—"not all owing to that. Thar's them gol danged copper-colored guests uv ther government—they're kickin' up three pints uv ther rumpus, more or less—consider'ly less of more than more o' less. Take a passel uv them barbarities an' shet 'em up inter a prison for three or thirteen years, an' ye'd see w'at an impression et'd make, now. Thar'd be several less massy-crees a week, an' ye wouldn't see a rufyan onc't a month. W'y, gentlefellows, thar'd never been a ruffian, ef et hedn't been fer ther cursed Injun tribe—not one! Ther infarnal critters ar' ther instigators uv more deviltry nor a cat wi' nine tails."

"Yes, we will admit that the reds are not of saintly origin," said Fearless Frank, with a quiet smile. "In fact I know of several who are far from being angels, myself. There is old Sitting Bull, for instance, and Lone Lion, Rain-in-the-Face, and Horse-with-the-Red-Eye, and so forth, and so forth!"

"Exactly. Every one o' 'em's a danged descendant o' ther old Satan, hisself."

"Layin' aside ther Injun subject," said Charity Joe, forking into the roasted venison, "I move that we take up a silent debate on ther



Ha! ha! ha! isn't that rich, now? Ha! ha! ha! arrest Deadwood Dick if you can!

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